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ABSTRACT

This commemorative document was published to celebrate the Bicentennial of the signing of the U.S. Constitution and to pay tribute to the bicentennial celebration efforts of the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration staff. The included articles are: (1) "Introduction: A Celebration at the National Archives" (F. Burke); (2) "The Odyssey of the Constitution" (A. Plotnik); (3) "Constitutional Celluloid: Bicentennial Films" (W. Blakefield); (4) "Portfolio: Personalities Share in the Celebration"; (5) "Exhibiting Constitutional Documents" (E. Soapes); (6) "Celebrating a Special Anniversary" (W. Cook); (7) "Teaching and the Constitution" (J. Mueller); (8) "A Commemoration in Print" (M. Ryan); and (9) "Sharing Constitutional Ideas" (R. Pollock). Numerous color and black/white photographs are included. (JHP)

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Celebrating the Constitution

A BICENTENNIAL RETROSPECTIVE

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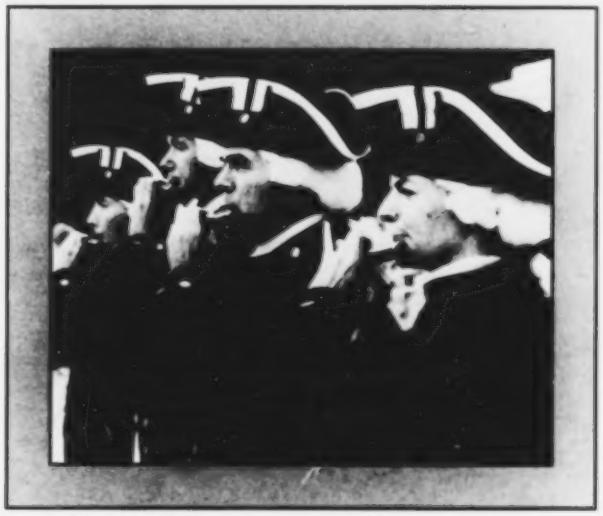
A COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE OF *PROLOGUE*,
QUARTERLY OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Celebrating the Constitution

A BICENTENNIAL RETROSPECTIVE



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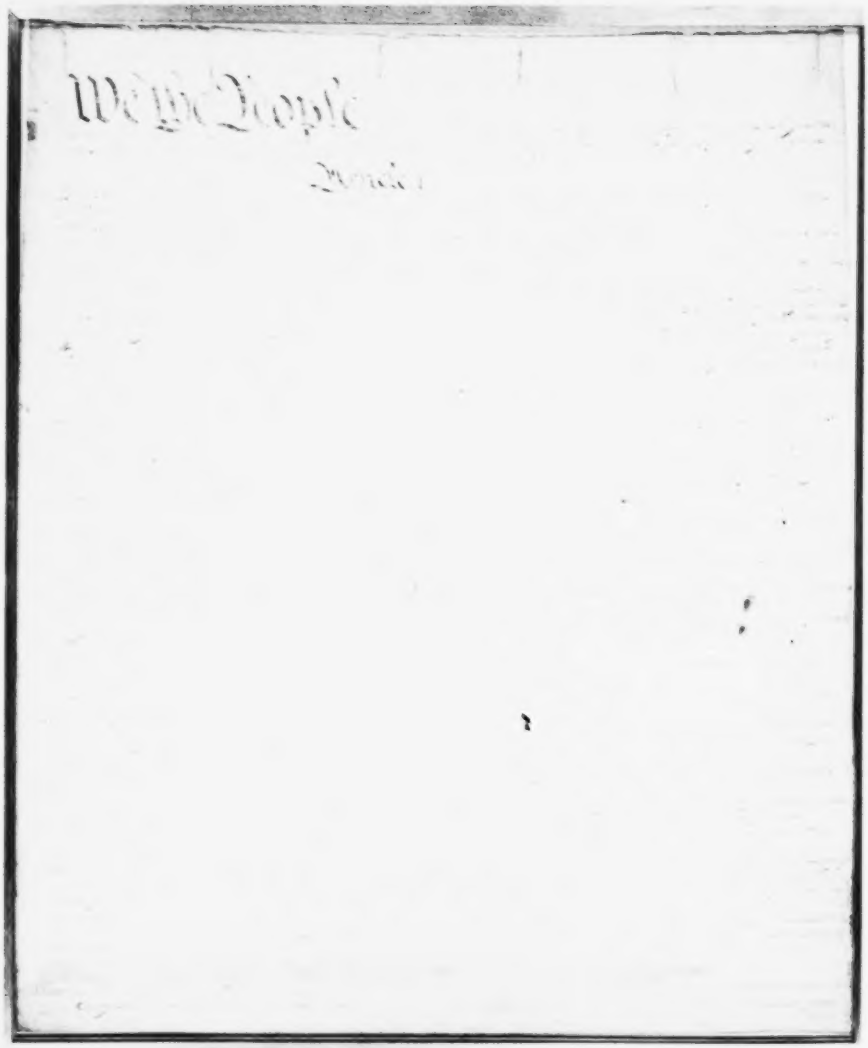

We the People

FOREWORD

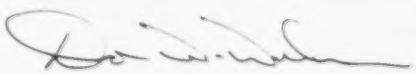
Nineteen eighty-seven was an important anniversary year for the United States in general and the National Archives in particular. On September 17, 1787, thirty-nine men representing twelve states gathered in Philadelphia to sign the document that is the foundation of our federal government. For more than two centuries this four-page oversized document has been the blueprint for our democratic way of life.

It is a document worthy of commemoration, and what better time to celebrate than the bicentennial anniversary of its signing! Certainly the National Archives took this anniversary very seriously. As the home of the Constitution, the National Archives was quite rightly one of the major focal points of bicentennial activity during 1987.

More specifically, this anniversary required the Archives staff to plan new exhibits and publications, arrange film festivals and lecture series, coordinate a panoply of special events, and help teachers and students alike to better understand and appreciate the Constitution. Such a massive effort required time and skillful coordination.

Late in 1984, my predecessor Robert M. Warner established an agency-wide committee to address the challenges of celebrating the bicentennial. The work of this committee and the hundreds of Archives staff members who worked on the bicentennial is described in the pages that follow. Under the leadership of Frank G. Burke and Linda N. Brown, committee members and staff carried out this mission with remarkable efficiency and effectiveness. This publication is a tribute to their work.

In paging through *Celebrating the Constitution*, it is my sincere hope that you will learn a thing or two about one of the greatest documents in our nation's history. More important, I hope that you will be intrigued enough to return to the Archives to visit the Constitution. Although the special anniversary year of 1987 has passed, any year is a good time to come and see this great charter of our freedom.



Don W. Wilson
Archivist of the United States

INTRODUCTION *Frank G. Burke*

A Celebration at the National Archives

As I stood in the Rotunda of the Archives on September 17 and watched the long line of people snake its way through the front door and past the cases containing the four pages of the signed Constitution, my mind drifted back to a summer day in the early 1970s when I was the Assistant Archivist for Educational (now Public) Programs. As such, the Rotunda and its exhibits were my bailiwick, and it was natural that a member of the security force would call me with a problem. The problem that summer day was that a visitor — the proverbial little old lady — was holding up the line of viewers of the Charters of Freedom because she insisted on her citizen's right to *read* the entire Constitution.

Under normal circumstances the four cases of the shrine contain the single page of the Declaration of Independence, the first and last of four pages of the Constitution, and the single page of the Bill of Rights. When I went to the area and spoke with the woman, I informed her that the two middle pages of the Constitution were not displayed, and if she really wanted to read the entire document I would give her a complimentary copy of a facsimile that did have all four pages.

She was polite but insistent, and a bit disturbed that the full Constitution was not there for the citizens to read, and as she moved away we talked about that. I told her that the limitation was the result of an architectural flaw in the design of the exhibition hall. John Russell Pope, the architect, had apparently seen the display of documents as they were exhibited at the Library of Congress between 1924 and 1952, when they transferred to the Archives. At the Library only three pages were on display — the Declaration was vertical, and the first and last pages of the Constitution were horizontal beneath it.

Right then and there, however, I promised the disappointed visitor that I would look into doing something extraordinary. September 17 is the anniversary of the signing of the Constitution — a fact generally known at that time to staff of the National Archives, but not common knowledge to the general public. I went to then Archivist James B. Rhoads, whose birthday happened to be on September 17, and suggested that we celebrate the holiday at the National Archives.

We had tried to hold public events on July 4, the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, but had encountered too much competition. Most military units — bands, honor guards, etc. — had long since been scheduled elsewhere on that date. It was difficult to engage a major speaker — Washington tends to be deserted in midsummer, except for tourists, and

congressmen were, of course, giving Fourth of July speeches in their own districts.

September 17, however, would allow us to plan events with fewer constaints. Military ceremonial units were available, most of Congress was in town and working, and there were few if any events that regularly fell on that date. Beginning in 1970, the National Archives celebrated September 17 and to make it more meaningful we began the tradition of exhibiting all four pages of the Constitution on that day. Originally, the pages were displayed in a simple wooden frame constructed by me and the Archives carpenter. It was placed in the center of the Rotunda and flanked by an all-service honor guard, with ceremonial changing of the guard every half hour. The idea was so novel that the first year the event was covered by Walter Cronkite on the CBS Evening News.

Since that time the celebration has evolved into what it is today. At one point there was conceived the idea of having a naturalization ceremony in front of the Constitution, with a prominent speaker to welcome the new citizens. These speakers have included Senator Mark Hatfield, Congressman Tom Lantos, philanthropist H. Ross Perot, Professor Barbara Jordon, and others. As we moved into the 1980s, the staff began concentrating on the bicentennial of the Constitution, and planning what could be done to make Constitution Day 1987 very special.

The result of that planning is shown in the following pages. In 1976 the Educational Programs staff thought of putting the Declaration on continuous display for seventy-six hours and calling it a "vigil." The event was very moving, and quite successful, so it seemed natural to do the same for the Constitution, but this time to have the vigil for eighty-seven hours. In the following pages there is a report on the activities and attendance during the vigil. During the years leading up to the bicentennial, the Archives had also sponsored a number of conferences and film festivals, and the National Archives Volunteers Association in Washington sponsored a lecture series, which presented ten lecturers a year addressing constitutional issues. For 1987 a special film series relating to the Constitution was scheduled, and in addition to the volunteers' lecture series, a special lecture by Justice Harry A. Blackmun was co-sponsored by the National Archives and the Supreme Court Historical Society. Also, beginning in 1985, the Archives had cooperated with local theatrical groups in preparing and presenting dramatic interpretations of historical material that was in the agency files held by the Archives. For 1987 these efforts were continued, but there was also a "street theater" production with the

Constitution as its theme.

Publications have been an important part of the Archives' educational and public programs since the 1940s, and 1987 was no exception. The public can now once again purchase a copy of Sol Bloom's *The Story of the Constitution*, which had been out of print for a generation; and a revised edition of *Signers of the Constitution* has been issued by the Archives as *Framers of the Constitution*, with considerable new material added. A third example of bicentennial publications is the National Archives' quarterly journal. *Prologue* published "Celebrating the Constitution" in 1985, "Documenting the Constitution" appeared in 1986, and in the bicentennial year it issued the third in the series, "Living With the Constitution." With all of that activity, one might have thought that the week of September 17, 1987, would be a disappointing anticlimax. We were pleasantly surprised, and a bit overwhelmed, when it was not.

The section entitled "Celebrating a Special Anniversary" provides a good flavor of the week's events, both staged and spontaneous — Sugar Ray Leonard making an impromptu speech to an enthusiastic crowd on the Constitution Avenue portico; Larry King marveling over coast-to-coast radio about the long line of people snaking through the Rotunda at midnight; the D.C. cab driver who drove a fare to the Archives at 3 a.m. and came inside himself to get his first look at the Constitution; the early morning joggers who detoured from the Mall, jogged up the thirty-nine steps, viewed the documents, and then continued on their way. Then there were the Girl Scouts handing out copies of the Constitution to all comers; the Boy Scouts acting as honor guard for part of the evening shift; the spit and polish of an all-service honor guard changing the guard with the precise click, click, click of their heels on the marble floor; the kids playing a video game about the Constitutional Convention while the adults watched warily from a polite distance.

All in all, the week could be described in contemporary terms as "a happening," which implies spontaneity. There were no fireworks, parades, patriotic speeches or recitations in the Rotunda, but what was there was the true embodiment of what the celebration was all about — the four pages on which our governmental and societal system is based. Those who were there will likely never forget it. For those were not there, we hope the following pages will provide a vicarious participation in the events of that glorious week. I hope the little old lady showed up.

Acting Archivist Frank G. Burke presided over celebration festivities.

The Odyssey of the Constitution

Arthur Plotnik

All of the excitement and hoopla generated by the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution has tended to give the impression that the document we now honor has always been so revered. Throughout the two hundred years of its existence, however, the Constitution has been subjected to warfare, flight, and neglect before it received its present icon-like status. Until 1920, the document was out of the public eye. Not until 1952 was the great charter installed in its present permanent home in the National Archives. Through this fascinating but often overlooked story of the odyssey of the Constitution, readers may enhance their knowledge of the founding document of our government.

In mid-September 1787, the penstrokes of the signing delegates to the Federal Convention transformed four sheets of parchment stationery into a historical monument with a destiny of its own. As a physical entity, the manuscript of the United States Constitution has since led a charmed existence, sometimes a thrilling one. Unlike the original engrossed Declaration of Independence, now time-worn and barely legible, the Constitution and its letter of transmittal have survived two centuries in fine form and are likely to endure for centuries more.

The parchments have traveled hundreds of miles by coach, river vessel, train, Model T Ford, and armored Marine personnel carrier; they have been encased in linen, oak, bronze, steel, glass, and helium; they have lain in storage in more than a dozen buildings in at least three cities. They have "fled" two wars. But because, for generations, the four large parchments were considered less suitable for exhibition than the one-sheet Declaration of Independence, the Constitution was spared the strain of public display in damaging environmental conditions.

By 1924, when the Constitution first went on exhibit at the Library of Congress, enough was known of preservation science to provide adequate short-range protection of the

Left: **Assembly Room in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, site of the signing of the Constitution in 1787.**

Below: **"Signing the Constitution," 1937, painting by Howard Chandler Christy.**

parchments. Today, at its permanent home in the National Archives, scientifically constructed cases and a formidable underground vault secure the future of the document while allowing it to be viewed at close range by any of the millions who wish to do so. From proud citizen to awe-struck foreign visitor to sticky-fingered youngster, each viewer is greeted by writing that can be read as easily as a letter from a friend.

The travels of the Constitution, now apparently at an end, began on Tuesday, September 18, 1787, just two days after the weekend engrossment by Jacob Shallus and a day after the signing at the Pennsylvania State House (Independence Hall). Major William Jackson, secretary of the Convention, was ordered to carry the engrossed Constitution, with transmittal letter, to the "United States in Congress assembled" in New York City. He did so via a stagecoach leaving Philadelphia at ten o'clock in the morning.

Until September 1921, the parchments remained in the custody of the secretary of state.

On September 20, 1787, Charles Thomson, secretary to the Congress, noted the receipt of the "new frame of government." The Constitution was read to Congress that day, though whether from the engrossed copy or a printed version is not known.

Home of the Congress at that time was the second floor of New York's City Hall, at Wall and Nassau streets. The Shallus parchments might have been moved during a renovation, then put back in 1789. That fall, with the creation of the State Department, "custody and charge" of the federal government's papers were transferred to the secretary of state, a position first occupied by Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson arrived in New York in March 1790 to assume his duties. He might have then viewed first-hand a document he had earlier called "unquestionably the wisest ever yet presented to men."

Until September 1921, the parchments remained in the custody of the secretary of state, moving about only according to the needs of that office and for safe-keeping. The aging ink was never allowed to fade from prolonged exhibition in raw light. The travels of the State Department, however, kept the parchments on the move. From 1790 to 1800 alone, they followed the Department through at least four offices in Philadelphia. In 1798, during one of that city's yellow fever epidemics, the secretary of

state was housed in Trenton; the Constitution might have made that trip as well.

By summer of 1800, the parchments were exposed to the heat and humidity of Washington, D.C., the new capital. They had arrived in May, carried by vessel to Lear's Wharf on the Potomac, for storage in the Treasury Building at Nineteenth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. The next year they were moved to the War Office on Seventeenth Street, a large brick structure where they remained until 1814.

Displaced parchments

The British were coming, and the capital city and its records were in the worst danger of the War of 1812. Thus did Secretary of State James Monroe warn the government in August 1814, after observing enemy forces in Maryland. A State Department clerk named Stephen Pleasanton "proceeded [in his own words years later] to purchase coarse linen, and cause it to be made into bags of convenient size, in which the gentlemen of the office" stashed the Constitution and other valuable documents.

Like war refugees, the documents were carted across the Potomac River over the Chain Bridge, to be hidden in an unused gristmill on the Virginia side; but a nearby cannon factory made this refuge too dangerous for more than a night. By the time the British entered Washington on August 24, the documents were headed toward Leesburg, Virginia, in wagons Pleasanton had borrowed from local farmers.

As the White House, Capitol, and other buildings burned that night, the Constitution was thirty-five miles away, safely locked in the empty Rokeby house in Leesburg. It was returned to the nation's capital in September.

Within Washington, however, the parchments continued to move

Independence Hall was the seat of Congress in 1776.

about. Addresses included a house on G Street near Eighteenth Street, Northwest; the War Office until 1820; Fifteenth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, where the Treasury now stands; Fourteenth Street near S Street in 1866; and in 1875, the State, War, and Navy Building at Seventeenth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. "Carefully wrapped and placed flat in a steel case," the Constitution awaited its rendezvous with the American public.

The Library years

With the spring of 1920 came a new order from the secretary of state: a committee would be formed to define preservation measures for "those documents of supreme value" under the department's custody. The committee studied the safe then housing the Constitution, finding it to be of thin steel neither fireproof nor offering "much obstruction to an evil-disposed person."

The committee also noted that, by an act of 1903, any executive agency might transfer to the Library of Congress the books, maps, and other materials it no longer used. President Theodore Roosevelt had earlier ordered some State Department records of the Continental Congress thus transferred. The committee now recommended that the Constitution be given over to the custody of the Library, with the possibility of public exhibition to be considered.

In September of the following year, Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes forwarded an executive order for the signature of President Warren Harding. Instigated by the State Department's library director and former chief of the Library of Congress Division of Manuscripts, the order called for the transfer of the Constitution and Declaration to the Library. In a covering letter Hughes stated that "in the Library of Congress these muniments will be in the custody of experts skilled in archival preservation, in a building of modern fireproof construction, where they can safely be exhibited."

Harding signed the order on September 29, praising the transfer as one that might "satisfy the laudable wish of patriotic Americans to have an opportunity to see the original fundamental documents upon which rest their independence and their government."

Hughes sent the order to Librarian of Congress Herbert Putnam the next day, notifying Putman of his readiness to "turn the documents over to you when you are ready to receive them." Putnam, already more than two decades into his forty-year term as

Librarian, was so ready to receive this prize for his institution that he turned up instantly at the State Department in the Library's Model T Ford mail wagon. He signed a receipt for the parchments, cushioned them on a pile of leather mail sacks in the Ford, and returned to the Library, where he placed the documents in his office safe.

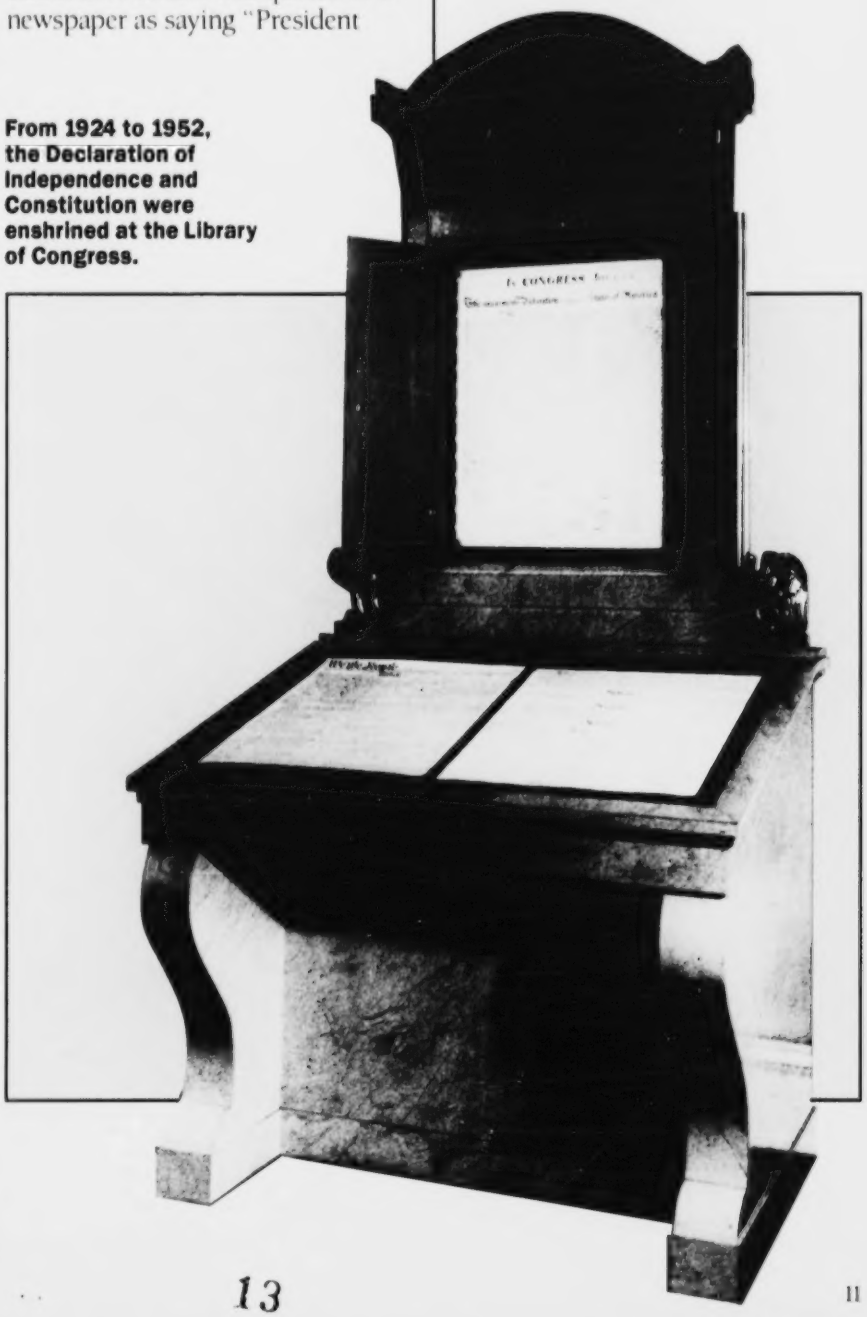
There they remained, across the street from the Capitol, awaiting a proper facility for display. In 1923 a Congressional appropriation provided $12,000 for a "safe, permanent repository of appropriate design" in the Library. A committee of scholars had already advised that the parchments could be exhibited if they were hermetically sealed and protected against strong light. That exhibition standard was now met in a marble, bronze, and glass shrine designed by Francis H. Bacon.

On February 28, 1924, in the presence of President and Mrs. Calvin Coolidge, Secretary of State Hughes, and a contingent of members of Congress, the Constitution was installed in its public shrine, which graced the second-floor exhibition hall of the magnificent Italian Renaissance Library of Congress Building. Oddly, for all the rhetoric that had gone before and was yet to come in matters concerning the documents, the installation ceremony took place "without a single utterance, save the singing of two stanzas of 'America.'"

Over the next seventeen years, until 1941, the Constitution remained on view at the Library; but in 1933, at the dedication of the massive new National Archives Building below Capitol Hill, President Herbert Hoover fanned a controversy that would smolder for almost two decades: the Archives versus the Library as the future home of the parchments.

Architect John Russell Pope had included a grand interior exhibition space in his design for the Archives. Soon after the groundbreaking in 1931, this rotunda had been described as a monumental space for displaying "documents of particular public interest." At the cornerstone and dedication ceremony in February 1933, President Hoover declared, "There will be aggregated here the most sacred documents of our history — the originals of the Declaration of Independence and of the Constitution of the United States."

The Library of Congress, however, did not agree. In 1935, Librarian Putnam was quoted in a newspaper as saying "President Hoover made a mistake." Putnam denied the quote later, but told Archives director Robert Connor — the nation's first Archivist — that the documents should remain where they were. The Library argued that it held the parchments as a result of executive order and congressional act; that a million people a year viewed the treasures in the Library's shrine; and that for the historian the documents complemented "surpassing material in our general collection that will never be duplicated in the archives."



From 1924 to 1952, the Declaration of Independence and Constitution were enshrined at the Library of Congress.

Left: **Arriving at the National Archives in an armored personnel carrier on December 13, 1952, the Constitution and Declaration of Independence were soon installed in their permanent home in the Exhibition Hall's rotunda.**

Below: **The unveiling ceremonies for the "Charters of Freedom," December 15, 1952, featured as speakers both President Harry S. Truman and Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson.**

From about 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt took the side of the National Archives. However, he was advised to be patient with the "proprietary" Herbert Putnam.

In March 1938, Putnam brushed off as newspaper gossip the rumors of an imminent transfer of the parchments to the Archives. He dismissed the Archives Rotunda, with its murals depicting the signings of the Declaration and Constitution, as merely "something that looks like a setting for documents."

Archivist Connor was not pleased.

Putnam retired in July 1938. About a year later, the new Librarian of Congress, poet Archibald MacLeish, made it clear that he would support the transfer; not because he thought that what Putnam had described as a "very charming" shrine was, as Roosevelt called it, a "little medieval thing," but because the engrossed parchments "are not important as manuscripts, they are important as themselves. Not to use; to look at." They belonged not in the Library's Manuscript Division, but in the Archives.

As if by inertia, however, the documents stayed put until December 1941, when the shock of Pearl Harbor convinced an already worried MacLeish that the Library's treasures must be removed for safekeeping. Two days before Christmas, along with the Declaration, the Constitution was taken from its shrine, packaged in acid-free paper and millboard, and locked in a specially designed bronze container. The day after Christmas, under armed guard, the bronze container was sealed with lead, packed in an oak box, and trucked to Union Station. Writer Robert Penn Warren, the Library's consultant in poetry late in the war, tells the story in meticulous detail:

> There [at Union Station] the cases were transferred to Compartment B, car A-1 (Pullman sleeper "Eastlake"), of the "National Limited" of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. The compartments adjoining and interconnecting on each side were occupied by Messrs. Shannon and Moriarty of the U.S.

Secret Service. . . . The Secret Service agents were armed.

Where was the Constitution headed? For Louisville, Kentucky, and the Bullion Depository at Fort Knox.

> It has been arranged to place the shipment in compartment 24 of the vault, a compartment 16′ x 9′ situated in the outer tier on the ground level. Here the wrapping papers of the oak cases were torn off, the markings and seals verified, the cases placed in the compartment. The temperature was read as 73 degrees F., the humidity estimated as 90% to 95%. Under these conditions the hermetic sealing became of instant importance. The key to the compartment was placed in its case in the vault, and the key to this case was removed to a safe in the office of the Chief Clerk. At 12:07 the vault was closed.

There in its muggy tomb, the Constitution remained until September 1944, disturbed only by an occasional check for condition and a change of containers (from bronze to steel) in 1943.

On Sunday morning, October 1, the Constitution was once again in its Washington shrine. In a smart ceremony with Marine color guard and band, Librarian MacLeish reopened the exhibit to the public. Concluding his remarks, he lauded a nation conceived in "free choice of the human spirit" and one that dared to choose its own form of government. Addressing the honor guard stationed by the shrine, he stated:

> The sheets of vellum and the leaves of ancient paper in these cases which you guard are the very sheets and leaves on which that form of government and that conception of human life were brought into being. Nothing that men have ever made surpasses them.

The journey just west

The transfer that was to take place never occurred under Roosevelt's administration. The war interrupted MacLeish's interest in the transfer; MacLeish left his Library post in 1944; Solon Buck, who served as Archivist after the war, felt the documents were in good enough hands at the Library; and Roosevelt died in 1945. The same year, President Harry S. Truman chose the self-confident, sometimes flamboyant Luther Evans as Librarian of Congress. Another six years passed before Evans explicitly indicated his willingness to go along with the transfer. Meanwhile, Wayne Grover, Archivist since 1948, became determined to pry the documents from the Library once and for all.

. . . the acquisition of the Constitution and the Declaration marked a new and long-awaited era of public esteem.

Grover let his feelings be known after a September 1951 ceremony at the Library. Attended by President Truman and other dignitaries, the event celebrated the "permanent" encasement of the documents in special helium-filled cases. Grover was clearly fed up "with ceremonies which gave the impression that the documents would remain everlastingly in the Library of Congress."

A hint of accord from Evans, however, encouraged Grover to set in motion the cumbersome political machinery that would finally move the parchments a few blocks west. He ordered a legal brief and a chemical report prepared. The first argued that the National Archives could indeed house the documents; the second showed the superiority of conditions at the Archives for the parchments' security and preservation.

Evans agreed, but he wanted to observe the proper protocol, including approval by the president and other chief officers and concerned committees. Letters and memos went back and forth. Grover took no chances, building a case as indestructible as he claimed

National treasures at the Archives: Washington's Annotated draft of the Constitution (front) and official journal of the Constitutional Convention.

the Archives Building to be. He presented evidence that even after a direct hit on the Archives by an atomic bomb, the Constitution could be dug out of the debris intact.

Still, Evans, whose background was in political science, moved with caution, and the maneuvering dragged on for months. A counsel remarked that there was no controversy between the Archives and the Library, who were merely "engaged in a mutual and harmonious effort to discover ways and means by which the transfer may be effectuated pursuant to law." Yet the legal questions multiplied, until at one point it seemed only an act of Congress could cut through them.

Finally, the issue was boiled down to a relatively simple request — "Transfer of certain documents to the National Archives" — that could be put before the Joint Committee on the Library on April 30, 1952. With some hesitation, the committee gave its unanimous approval to Item Five among eight items on its agenda, *ordering* the transfer of the Declaration and Constitution.

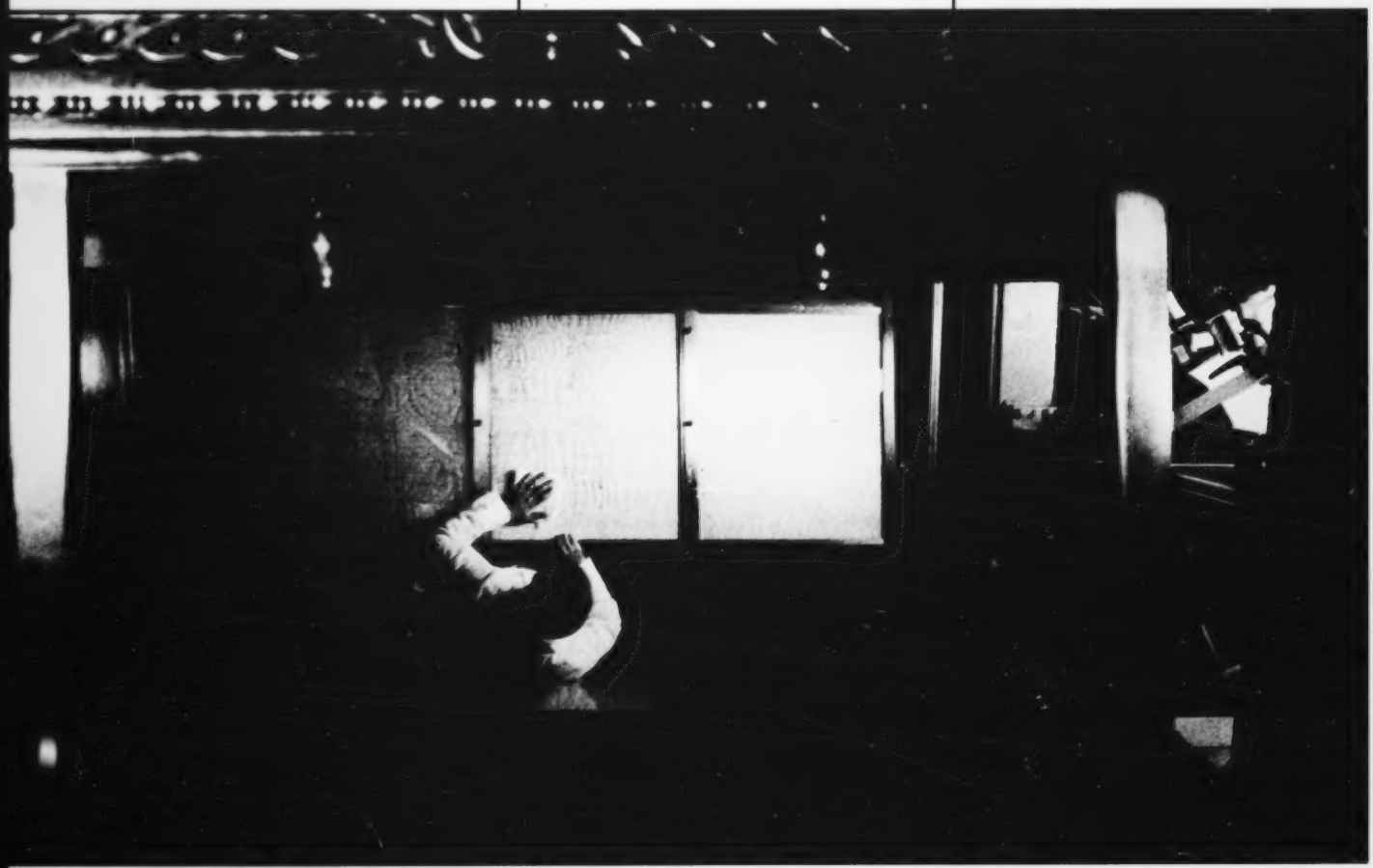
Evans, thus "ordered" to act by what the Library described as a "routine application" of statutes, could face those of his senior staff members who abhorred the idea. One such staffer was David Mearns, chief of the Manuscript Division. Projecting what must have been a sense of personal loss, Mearns lamented, "to have been host — even to have been host by sufferance — to those imperishable records has been to enjoy a transient prestige which the Library is unlikely ever to enjoy again."

A symbolic act

The Library's prestige survived well enough, maintained by such exhibited treasures as a Gutenberg Bible and Lincoln's handwritten Gettysburg Address, not to mention the unequalled volume and depth of the research collections. For the National Archives, however, the acquisition of the Constitution and the Declaration marked a new and long-awaited era of public esteem. At last, the display cases built to hold what Hoover had called "the most sacred documents of our history" no longer stood as the conspicuously, embarrassingly "empty shrine."

On a sunny December 13, 1952, the Constitution took what is hoped was its last journey. Carefully encased and crated, the parchments rode on mattresses in an armored Marine Corps personnel carrier rumbling down Pennsylvania and Constitution Avenues on tractor

Viewed down 20 feet from the Exhibition Hall, a conservator is at work carefully cleaning a case containing a page of the Constitution.



treads. The vehicle was accompanied by two light tanks, a motorcycle escort, a color guard, two military bands, ceremonial troops, and four servicemen carrying submachine guns. Members of all the armed services and other spectators lined the route.

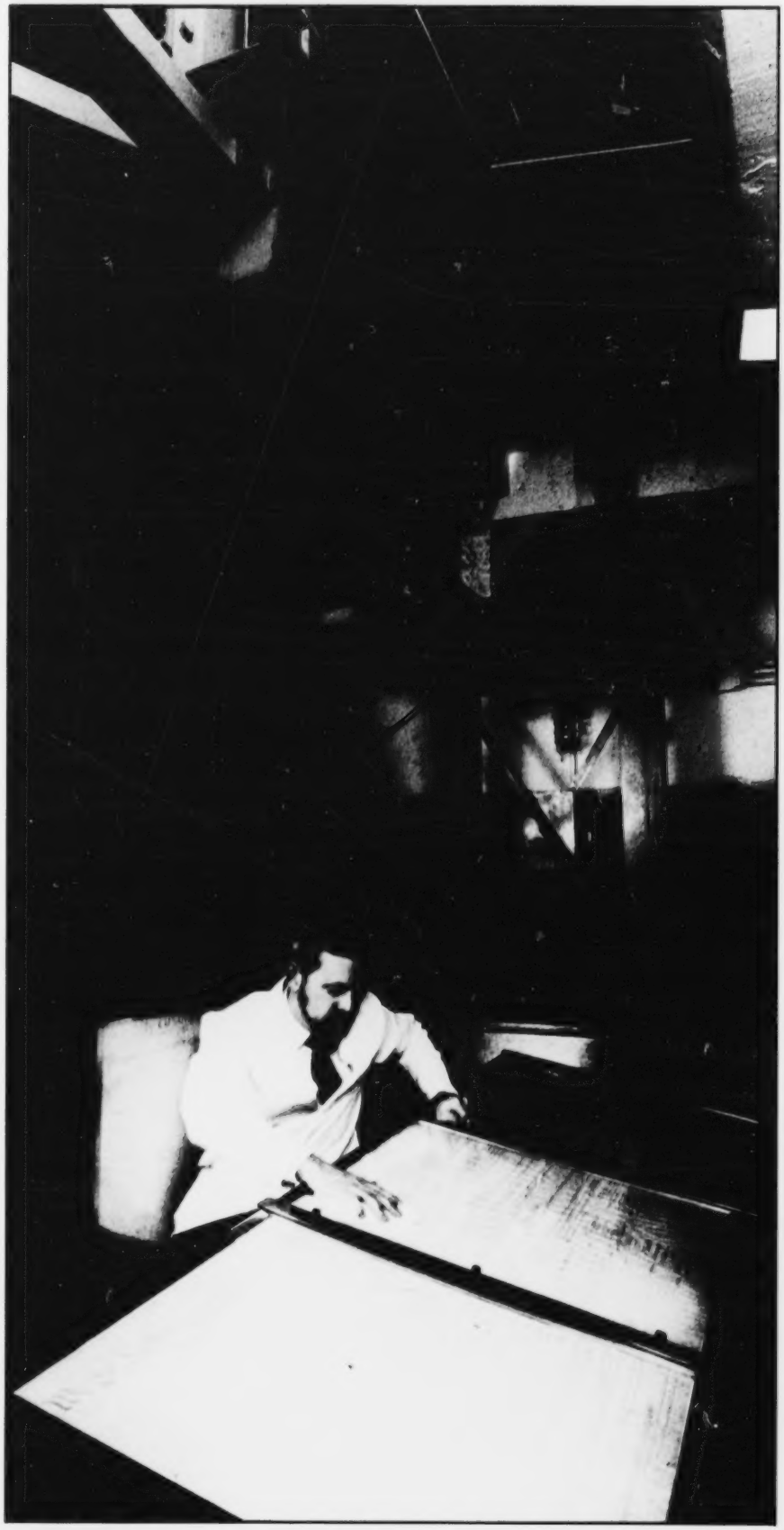
Two days later, in a ceremony presided over by Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson, the documents were formally enshrined in their special exhibit cases. President Truman was on hand to offer this encomium:

> We are engaged here today in a symbolic act. We are enshrining these documents for future ages. This magnificent hall has been constructed to exhibit them, and the vault beneath, that we have built to protect them, is as safe from destruction as anything that the wit of modern man can devise. All this is an honorable effort, based upon reverence for the great past, and our generation can take just pride in it.

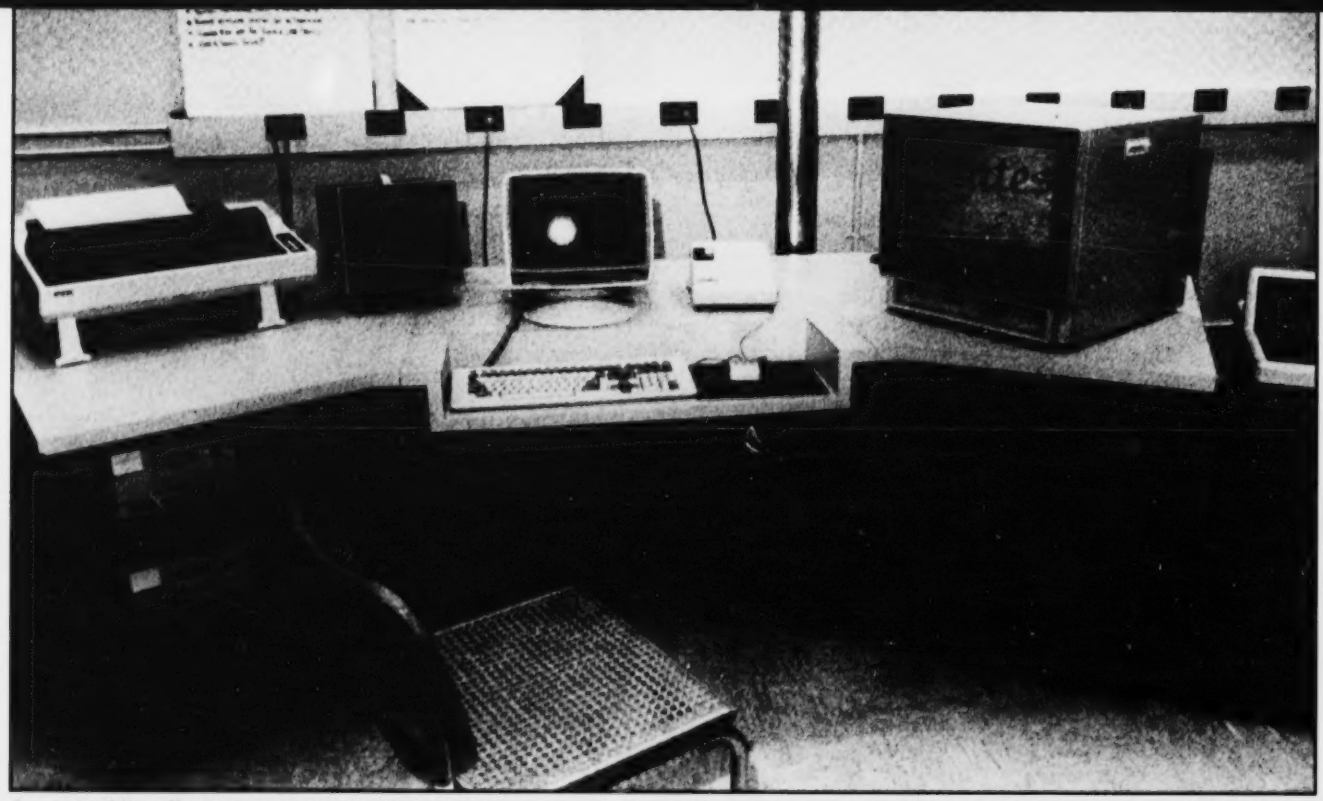
This magnificent hall

The Constitution thus rests in a setting whose magnificence seems equal to the ever-increasing glory of the document. Indeed, the setting contributes to that glory. After passing between the colossal bronze doors above Constitution Avenue, the visitor crosses a foyer and enters the Rotunda. Seventy-five feet to the dome, the marbled room presents a cavernous, cathedral-like atmosphere inspiring awe and reverence. High on the walls to the left and right (facing north toward the Charters of Freedom) are the romantic 1936 murals of Barry Faulkner — to the left, celebrating the Declaration, and to the right, the Constitution. The latter shows James Madison submitting the Constitution to George Washington and the Constitutional Convention.

Finally, straight ahead, three broad stairs rise to a platform on which rests the bronze and marble



Kenneth Harris, director of preservation policy and services, inspects condition of the Constitution in its protective vault at the National Archives.



As part of its effort to preserve the Constitution and other important documents, the National Archives installed a highly sophisticated electronic camera specially designed to monitor the condition of both the ink and the paper.

case containing the Constitution, the parchments of which lie almost flat. Behind the case, the Declaration of Independence is displayed vertically in its own secure but graceful frame. Overall, the charters are framed by a symmetrical shrine of four Corinthian columns and varicolored stone.

Two of the bronze-framed panels hold the first page of the Constitution ("We the People . . .") and the signature page. As the caption to the left explains, pages two and three and the Letter of Transmittal are exhibited only on Constitution Day, September 17, and are kept in the vault below the rest of the year.

The third panel holds an original parchment copy of the Bill of Rights, which was in the possession of the National Archives long before the transfer of the Constitution from the Library of Congress. The document is the federal government's official copy of the first ten amendments to the Constitution; thirteen other copies were made and sent to the states for ratification.

In March 1940, as requested by the Library of Congress, the National Bureau of Standards submitted a basic plan for preservation of the documents. The bureau recommended sealed receptacles containing an inert gas such as helium and a moisture content of four grains per cubic foot. World War II put the plan on hold, but in 1945 the preservation project began in earnest. Careful experiments tested the effects of varied lighting and atmospheric conditions on parchment — that is, on the protein compound collagen, the essential constituent of animal skins. Along with the bureau's scientists, experts from the firms of Libbey-Owens-Ford Glass, Eastman Kodak, and American Window Glass contributed to an effort that resulted in a trial sealing of facsimile documents in 1950.

The test established the effectiveness of the sealing procedure and leak-detection system, and in 1951 a soldered lead strip locked the Constitutional parchments themselves into their airtight protective sandwiches of bronze, glass, cellulose, and helium. The cases have proved themselves for decades now, displaying the Constitution in its third century in exactly the visible condition as that of 1950.

To ensure that any nonvisible deterioration of the parchments will be detected, the National Archives contracted in 1985 for design of a monitoring system employing the latest technology "to assess the state of preservation . . . with specific attention to changes in readability from ink-flaking, ink-fading, offsetting of ink to glass, changes in document dimensions, and enlargement of existing tears and holes." The long-term monitoring system, contracted with the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, through the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, is space-age indeed. Its design calls for an electronic imaging device similar to that of NASA's space telescope and the kind of computer analysis used to interpret data from the Voyager space probes.

Alan Calmes demonstrates the various uses of the electronic-imaging system designed to take a "fingerprint" of the exact state of the Charters of Freedom at any given moment and to match the current state with earlier recordings.

Vault within a vault

The National Archives Building itself was conceived as an enormous vault; it is essentially a double building, with one cube inside and projecting above the other. The inner cube is a vast concrete vault subdivided into smaller vaults.

Situated approximately in the center of all this vaulting is the extraordinary, fifty-ton steel and reinforced concrete vault containing the Constitutional parchments in their sealed enclosures. It was manufactured by the Mosler Safe Company expressly for the documents. Its own walls and sliding lid are each one foot and three inches thick, and it is shielded by at least three masonry walls on each side. Directly above the lid is a shaft leading twenty-two feet up to the display shrine in the Rotunda. A scissor-jack apparatus raises a platform carrying the enclosed parchments from vault to exhibit shrine each day of public display; at closing, the platform is lowered. The vault's lid stays open when the documents are raised each morning. Those pages of the Constitution that are not regularly displayed are kept in a container within the vault.

Alongside the shrine in the Rotunda, two armed guards are stationed to answer routine questions and, of course, to protect the documents. The electric jacking apparatus to lower the documents can be operated by the guards. A back-up manual system can also do the job.

Could a determined hostile agent break into the case and damage the parchments before being stopped? It would be extremely difficult. The thick glass and other bulletproof material atop the exhibit case are also linked to an alarm system set off by jarring pressure. Breakage of glass, among other warning triggers, will cause the platform to retreat to its vault. Other armed guards are stationed nearby to take necessary actions.

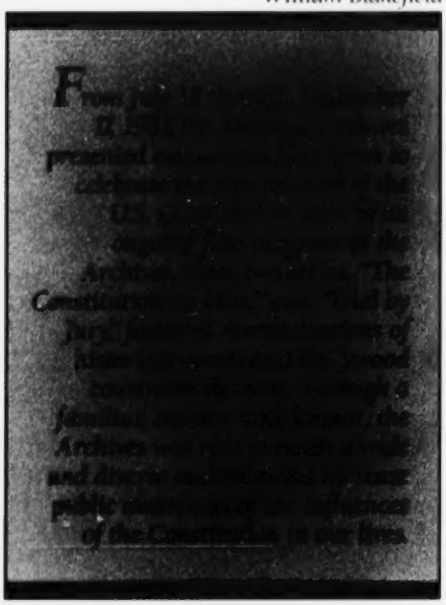
Such an action became necessary for the first time on October 10, 1986, when an assailant stepped up to the shrine shortly after the Exhibit Hall's opening hour (10 a.m.) and delivered a series of hammer blows to the outer glass. The claw hammer put star-shaped holes in the half-inch protective glass, but did not damage the sealed enclosures beneath. Two guards subdued the assailant, who was charged with destruction of federal property.

The two-hundred-year-old parchments are at the end of their travels and safe — not only held in storage "as safe from destruction as anything that the wit of modern man can devise," but safely displayed so that millions can appreciate the original charters of American nationhood.

CONSTITUTIONAL CELLULOID

Bicentennial Films

William Blakefield

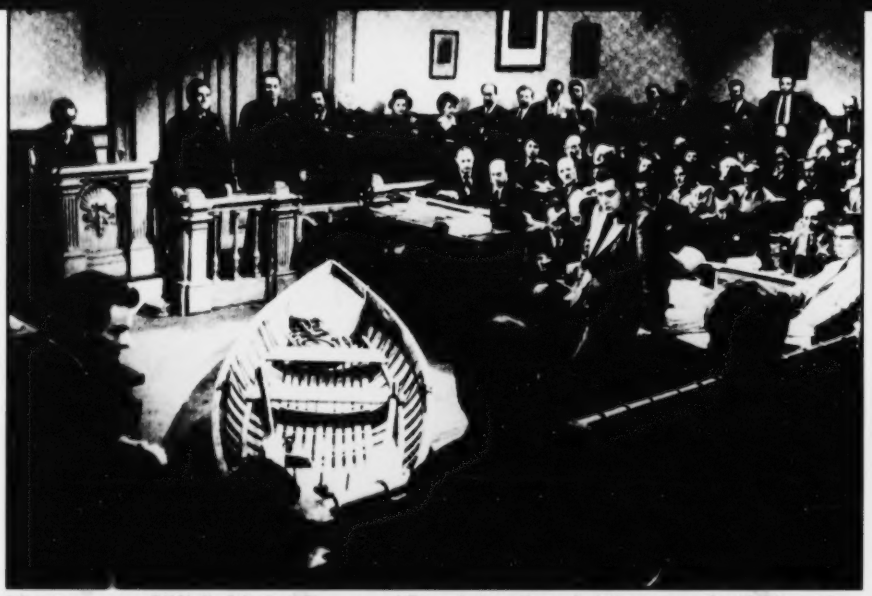


Our bicentennial film program offered the National Archives an opportunity to bring the history of the Constitution to a broad, nonscholarly audience. In the last several decades, motion pictures have become part of our educational landscape, demonstrating their ability to dramatize history in a way not possible by any other means. The goal of "The Constitution on Film" series was to present to an adult audience the major events surrounding the drafting of the Constitution, the historical development of our system of laws, and a contemporary look at the governmental institutions that evolved from the outline provided by the founding fathers. A second series, "Trial by Jury," featured seven Hollywood courtroom dramas that have played a major role in shaping popular perceptions of American jurisprudence.

The constitutional film program was part of an ongoing series of free public film screenings that have been held at the National Archives for several years. Our theater, on the fifth floor of the Archives' main building, is capable of showing motion pictures in 35mm and 16mm formats and has recently been equipped with a large-screen video projection system. "The Constitution on Film" was presented on Fridays at noon, while "Trial by Jury" was shown at noon on Thursdays (with a repeat screening at 7:00 p.m.). The program ran from July 18

through September 17, Constitution Day.

Initially, "The Constitution on Film" series seemed to be the most challenging to program. While the re-creation of history is a natural area for motion pictures, it is a difficult feat to accomplish successfully. Most of us who attended school during the 1950s and 60s have rather unpleasant memories of classroom films that attempted to grapple with historical subjects. Millions of school children suffered through poorly written and cheaply made films with titles like *Our Living Constitution* or *Our Founding Fathers at Philadelphia*. If memory is to be trusted, these films invariably presented characters delivering dialogue heavy with historical "fact":

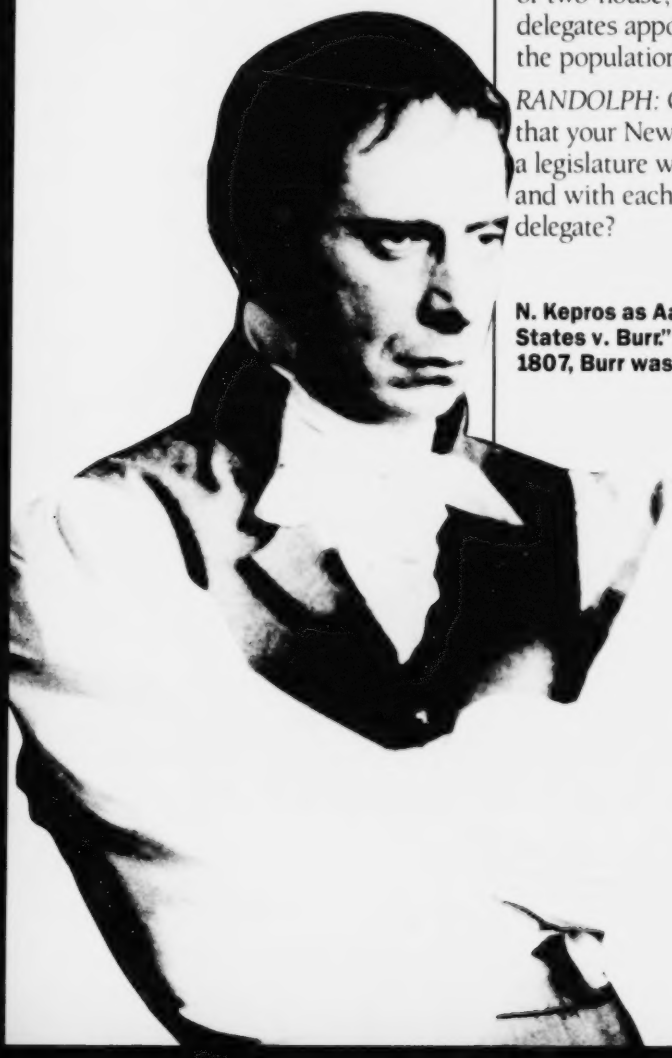


Montgomery Clift (left) and Raymond Burr (standing right) appear in "A Place in the Sun," a melodrama based upon a monumentally successful novel.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN: Mr. Paterson, I would like you to meet Edmund Randolph who has just proposed the Virginia Plan.

WILLIAM PATERSON: I understand your plan proposes a bicameral, or two-house, legislature with delegates apportioned according to the population of each state.

RANDOLPH: Correct, sir. Is it true that your New Jersey Plan proposes a legislature with a single house and with each state having but one delegate?



N. Kepros as Aaron Burr in "United States v. Burr." Tried for treason in 1807, Burr was quickly acquitted.

PATERSON: Indeed it does, sir. I wonder if some sort of compromise is not possible between the two plans?

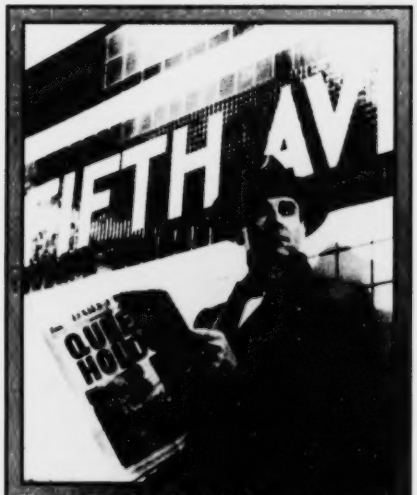
FRANKLIN: Perhaps, gentlemen. But if so, it will have to be a very *great compromise*. . .

Early screenings for "The Constitution on Film" series confirmed many of the worst fears about the classroom films of the period. Fortunately, however, as the selection process continued, it

The "Trial by Jury" series was intended as an exploration of a film genre . . .

became apparent that during the last twenty years educational films had changed enormously. With polished scripts and relatively high production values, these more recent films attempted to bring history to life — presenting history within the structure of a valid dramatic narrative. While not always cinematic masterpieces, they did at least recognize the growing sophistication of successive generations of students raised on such television programs as *Roots* and *The Adams Chronicles*.

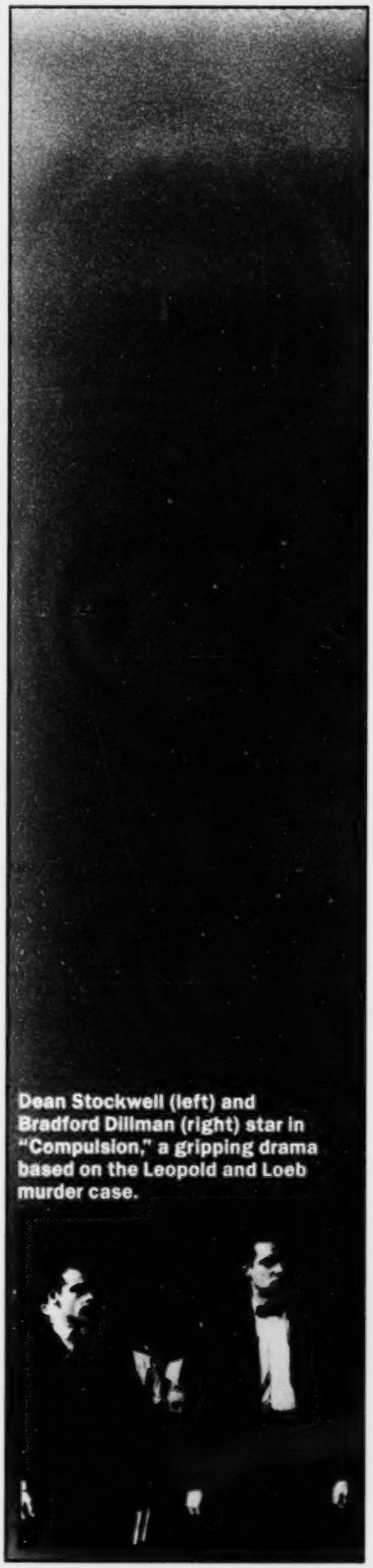
Perhaps no single person has contributed to the growth of the



Henry Fonda starred in Alfred Hitchcock's thriller, "The Wrong Man."

educational film more than Robert Saudek who, during the 1950s, produced the television series *Omnibus*. This critically acclaimed program presented dozens of historical dramas — all performed live before an audience of millions. In 1964, Robert Saudek produced the *Profiles in Courage* series for NBC, based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning book by John F. Kennedy. Each of the scripts of the program had been personally approved by President Kennedy shortly before his death, making this the first time a president of the United States had been involved in the production of a television dramatic series. Robert Saudek's own production company, Robert Saudek Associates, later went on to create more than a dozen films for the classroom that are now part of the curricula in virtually every school system in the United States.

Since several films by Robert Saudek were used in "The Constitution on Film" series, he graciously agreed to provide introductory remarks at the first screening (Mr. Saudek is now chief of the Motion Picture Division of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.). This opening program featured a two-part film by Robert Saudek about the American Revolution, *The Cause of Liberty* and *The Impossible War*. Made in 1972, these titles were selected because they effectively presented many of the issues that concerned Americans in the decade before the drafting of the Constitution. They tell the true story of young John Laurens (played by the then-unknown Michael Douglas) who is an American student studying in London. Faced with the deteriorating relationship between the colonies and Great Britain, he decides to return home to join in the struggle. John fights at Germantown, experiences the discouragement of Valley Forge, and obtains French support for the colonists. Tragically, he is killed in an ambush immediately following



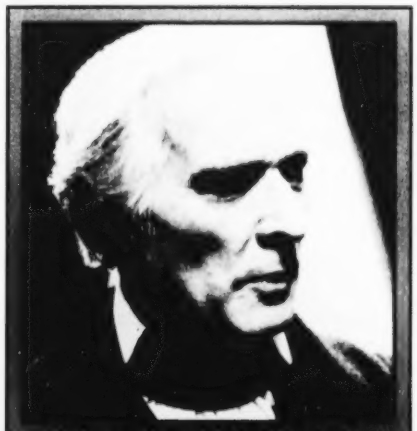
Dean Stockwell (left) and Bradford Dillman (right) star in "Compulsion," a gripping drama based on the Leopold and Loeb murder case.

the surrender at Yorktown.

The Cause of Liberty and *The Impossible War* are models of history being brought successfully to the screen. Much of the narration and dialogue are taken directly from actual correspondence between John Laurens and his father, Henry, president of the First Continental Congress. Thus, the issues important to their lives — loyalty to the mother country, slavery in the colonies, the hardships of the war — are integrated naturally into the film. This level of authenticity would be difficult to achieve were the events of the period seen through the eyes of fictional characters. It is a tribute to the filmmaker that many in our audience were visibly moved by the death of John Laurens — a rare accomplishment for an "educational" film.

Much of the success of the series may have been due to the continuing popularity of the trial film itself.

Several of the titles used in "The Constitution on Film" series were documentaries. One highlight was *Storm Over the Supreme Court,* produced as a CBS special report in 1961. The film did an expert job of tracing the history of the Supreme Court, with an emphasis on some of its more controversial decisions. Although more recent films have done more comprehensive and up-to-date treatments of the subject matter, none can duplicate its presentation of the words of America's great legal minds in dramatic readings by Carl Sandburg, Fredric March, Archibald MacLeish, and Mark Van Doren. Programs like *Storm Over the Supreme Court* are a reminder of what we have lost since such programming has largely disappeared from the commercial networks.



Ed Holmes played John Marshall in "Mr. Chief Justice," a film concerned with historic cases ruled on by the Marshall Court.

The most popular film of "The Constitution on Film" series was undoubtedly *Crisis: Behind a Presidential Commitment,* first broadcast by ABC News in October 1963. This landmark documentary showed the confrontation between the Kennedy administration and Governor George Wallace over the integration of the University of Alabama. *Crisis* was one of the earliest films in the cinéma vérité movement of documentary filmmaking, made possible by the increasing mobility of 16mm camera equipment. For the first time, the filmmaker was able to follow his subjects with his camera to record their activities as they participated in real events. Thus we are permitted intimate access to planning sessions in the White House between President Kennedy and Attorney General Robert Kennedy, as well as in the Alabama State House between Governor Wallace and his staff. This is history at its most gripping, allowing the viewer a remarkably candid view of a dramatic confrontation between state and federal authority. We were pleased that "The Constitution on Film" series permitted us to screen this rare historical document that has slipped into near obscurity since its original broadcast.

While it was hoped that our program of Hollywood courtroom dramas, "Trial by Jury," would have wide popular appeal, great public interest in classic fictional films is by no means guaranteed. In competition with videocassettes and cable television, many commercial repertory film theaters have reported declining attendance in recent years. In our case, however, we were pleasantly surprised to find that the "Trial by Jury" series was to be one of the most popular film programs we had ever held. Attendance was strong at the outset, and gradually grew as the series continued.

Much of the success of the series may have been due to the contin-

Spencer Tracy and Fredric March appeared in "Inherit the Wind," a film of the 1925 trial pitting evolutionists against fundamentalists.

uing popularity of the trial film itself. Since the beginning of the sound era in motion pictures, courtroom dramas have been popular with audiences. Many of the early films were transferred directly from the stage or from popular literary works. Among the most successful of these during the 1930s were the Perry Mason films, which were based on the books by Earle Stanley Gardner (Perry Mason was alternately played by Donald Woods, Warren William, and Richard Cortez). Film proved to be an ideal medium for the courtroom drama, heightening conflict through the use of close-ups and cross-cutting among the characters.

The trial film reached its heyday during the 1950s and 1960s. Unlike earlier films that were essentially melodramas, postwar films frequently reflected the social concerns and values of their time. Growing sensitivity to racial issues, for example, was mirrored in *Twelve Angry Men* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*. George Stevens's *A Place in the Sun*, loosely based on Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*, raised fundamental questions about traditional American values of home and family versus the more "modern" pursuits of wealth and status. Changing sexual attitudes were reflected in *Anatomy of a Murder*, which although mild by today's standards, used explicit language in the depiction of a rape case.

The "Trial by Jury" series was intended as an exploration of a film genre, rather than a literal depiction of how our legal system actually operates. Yet it is worth noting that many of the films in this series were closely based on fact. *Inherit the Wind* was a fairly accurate portrayal of the Scopes trial, frequently using the actual transcript from the courtroom for much of the dialogue — something no dramatist could hope to improve upon. Other films in the series that were taken from real cases were *The Wrong Man*, *Compulsion*, *They Won't Forget*, and *Anatomy of a Murder*. Many in our audience reported that seeing these films inspired them to go to the library to learn more about the characters and events depicted, thus adding an unanticipated educational component to the series.

More than three thousand people attended these screenings in the main building of the Archives . . .

Early in the planning for our bicentennial film program, several of the National Archives field branches expressed an interest in presenting films in their several locations in cities throughout the country. Each branch was thus given an information packet containing the names and addresses of distributors for the films as well as publicity materials, including press releases and still photographs. This approach allowed each branch to customize the programs in a way that best served its needs. Indivi-

dual branches' series ran several days to several weeks in length and took place throughout the year.

The field branches reported intense interest in the constitutional film programs in their communities and were frequently able to arrange cosponsorship with local organizations. This arrangement not only enabled the field branches to "bring the Constitution to the people" in an entertaining way but also helped them to strengthen cooperative relations with other institutions. Peter Bunce, director of the Chicago Branch, was able to integrate his series with those regularly held by the Chicago Public Library Library Cultural Center. In several other cities, local universities offered the films for academic credit. Villanova University, working with our Philadelphia Branch, made attendance mandatory for several classes in its Communications Arts Department — a captive audience, perhaps, but no less welcome because of it. Other institutions participating in the National Archives film program were Bentley College (Massachusetts), the New Jersey State Museum, the Jimmy Carter Library, the Johnson County (Kansas) Historical Museum, Texas Christian University, the Fort Worth Public Library, the Denver Center Cinema, Saddleback College of Mission Viejo (California), the Seattle Public Library, and the University of Washington.

Our constitutional film program proved to be among the most popular of the many events held by the National Archives during the bicentennial. More than three thousand people attended these screenings in the main building of the Archives, while a similar number saw the program under the sponsorship of the field branches. By presenting two different series, we were able to attract an audience with a wide variety of interests. It was perhaps not surprising that "The Constitution on Film" series, with its greater educational "content," attracted a somewhat smaller — but enthusiastic — audience. Nevertheless, it was gratifying to learn that both "The Constitution on Film" and "Trial by Jury" were regarded as substantial enough educationally to be offered for credit at the college level.

As with previous public film screenings, we found "The Constitution on Film" and "Trial by Jury" series reaped benefits for the Archives beyond their immediate

In "To Kill a Mocking Bird," Gregory Peck defended a black man accused of murder in a small southern town.

educational value. Through the efforts of our Public Affairs Office, the program was heavily publicized in local newspapers and magazines. With different titles being screened each week, the sheer repetition of the publicity no doubt played a major role in heightening public awareness of the bicentennial and the National Archives' role in the celebration. Furthermore, the large numbers of people who attended the screenings enabled us to reach a large audience with announcements about other bicentennial events at the Archives, including exhibits, lectures, and the 87-Hour Vigil.

The experience gained through our bicentennial film program has demonstrated a great public support for historical celebrations beyond what was anticipated. A frequent (and welcome) criticism of the "Trial by Jury" series, for example, was that only seven courtroom dramas were presented. Certainly, a series of ten or twelve such films would have permitted a fuller exploration of the genre. While the support for "The Constitution on Film" was not quite as strong overall, the large attendance for several of the documentary titles indicated that the public also has a keen interest in film as history—the major commitment of our ongoing public film programs.

For a complete listing of the motion pictures presented in our bicentennial film program, please write to:

Office of Public Programs
The National Archives
Washington, DC 20408.

Contributor: Rosanne Butler

Jose Ferrer, Van Johnson, and Humphrey Bogart starred in "The Caine Mutiny."

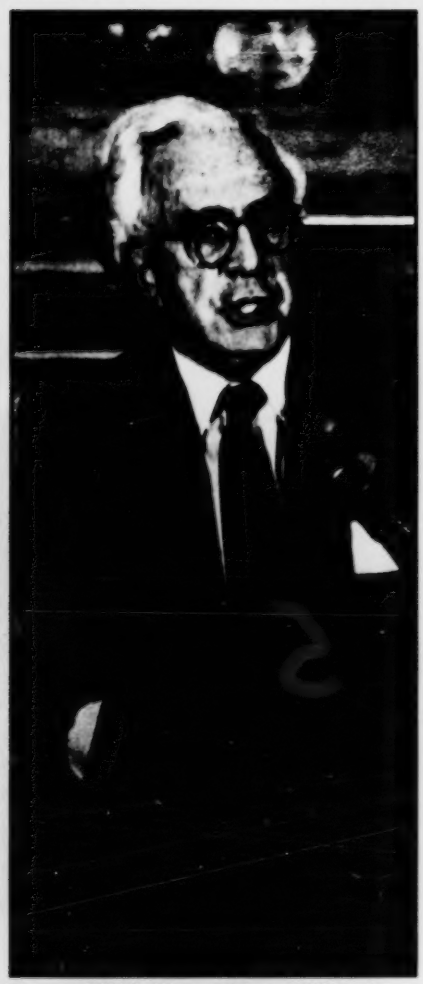
Portfolio

Personalities Share in the Celebration

In an average year, the National Archives attracts about one million visitors to its main building on Constitution Avenue. During 1987, though, the bicentennial anniversary of the U.S. Constitution drew more people than ever before to the Rotunda. During the week of the 87-Hour Vigil alone, more than 37,500 visitors stopped in to view the documents. Among the thousands who came in 1987 were a number of visitors well known in the fields of politics, entertainment, journalism, and sports. They came to see the Constitution, to participate in special events, and to use the Archives as a setting for special broadcasts.

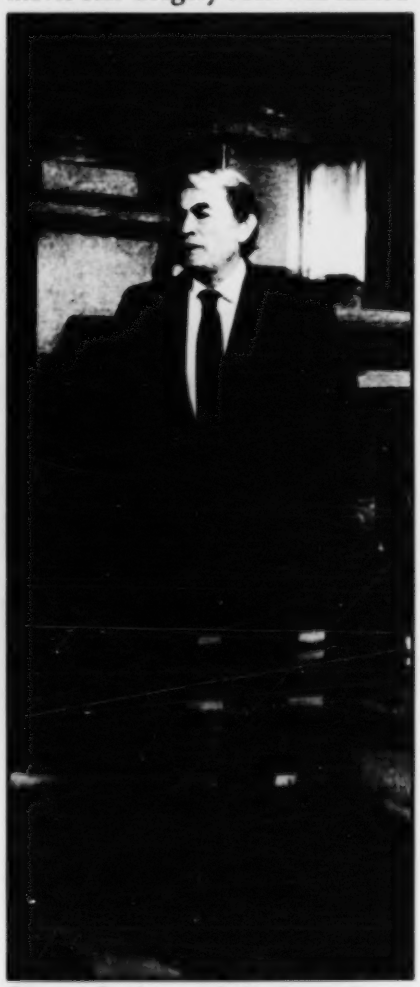
Among the representatives of government who came to help celebrate the Constitution's anniversary were former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court Warren Burger; retired Associate Justice Lewis Powell; John Stennis, president pro tempore of the U.S. Senate; Senator Strom Thurmond; Senator Charles McC. Mathias; and mayors Wilson Goode of Philadelphia and Marion Barry of Washington, DC.

Entertainers from stage, screen, television, and sports made appearances at the Archives. Stage star Joel Grey was interviewed on radio, movie star Gregory Peck was filmed



Former White House Counsel Lloyd Cutler spoke on the Constitution.

Louis Powell, retired Supreme Court Justice, opened the 87-hour vigil.



Gregory Peck recorded a dramatic Constitutional commentary.

in the Rotunda for a program by CBS, and television star Bob Newhart toured the building. During the vigil itself, world boxing champion Sugar Ray Leonard stopped by to say a few words on the meaning of citizenship.

The Rotunda in Washington, DC, may have been the focus of national attention, but the celebration was also carried on throughout the country in the National Archives' field branches. Well-known personalities took part in observances of the anniversary in various branches. Speaker of the House Jim Wright, Senator Thomas Eagleton, the governors of Colorado and Kansas, Mayor Andrew Young of Atlanta, and Metropolitan Opera singer Jerome Hines all participated in festivities designed to bring the message of the Constitution to as many people as possible.

As the 87-Hour Vigil's register shows, visitors from all over the country and the world came to observe the bicentennial anniversary of the Constitution in its permanent home in the National Archives. On these pages a few of the notable visitors are pictured. Because they are recognized by the public, they could make the public more aware of the event. But all who shared in the celebration, regardless of their fame, were essential to the success of the bicentennial commemoration and to the affirmation of the centrality of the U.S. Constitution to American life.

1

2

1. Former Chief Justice Warren Burger with several young Constitution viewers.

2. CBS Evening News with Dan Rather opened and closed in the Rotunda on September 17.

3. Marion Barry, the mayor of Washington, DC, added his words to the celebration.

4. Preston Tisch, Postmaster General, unveiled new Constitution stamps in the Rotunda at the National Archives, August 28, 1987.

5. Sen. Strom Thurmond spoke at a symposium sponsored by the Archives Volunteer Constitution Study Group.

6. Gov. Richard Thornburgh of Pennsylvania (center), and Mayor Wilson Goode of Philadelphia. (right)

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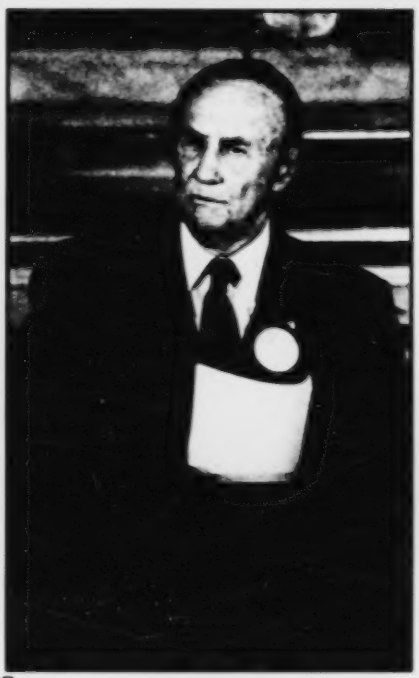

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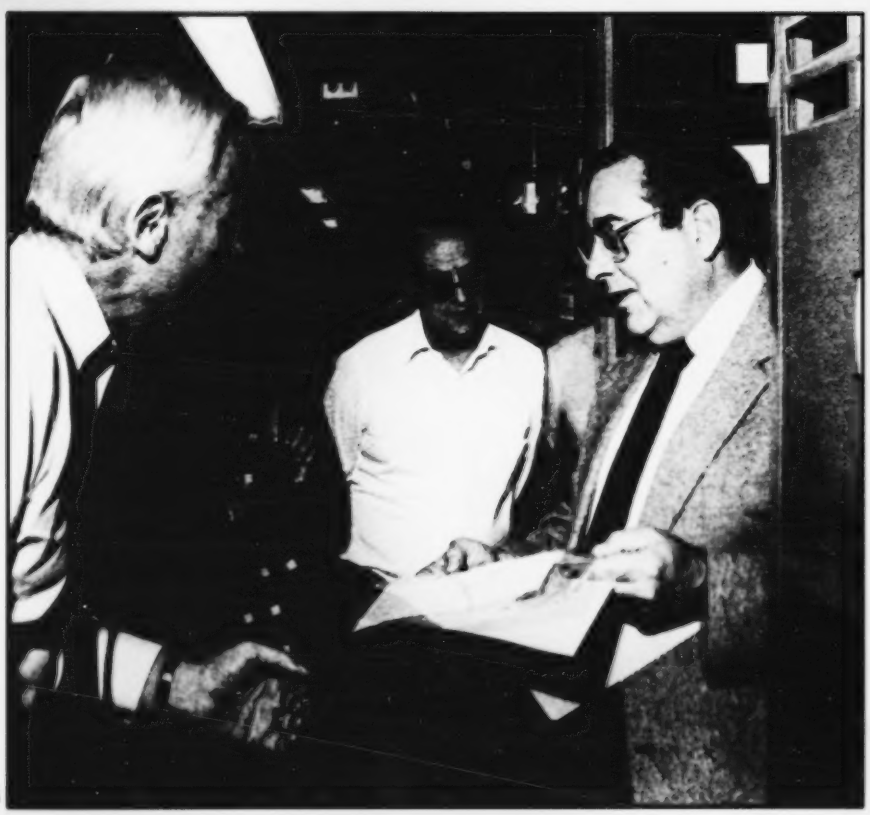


3

1. Princess Alexandra journeyed from Kent, England, for a close look at the Constitution.

2. Prof. Dick Howard of the University of Virginia and Sen. Charles Mathias of Maryland.

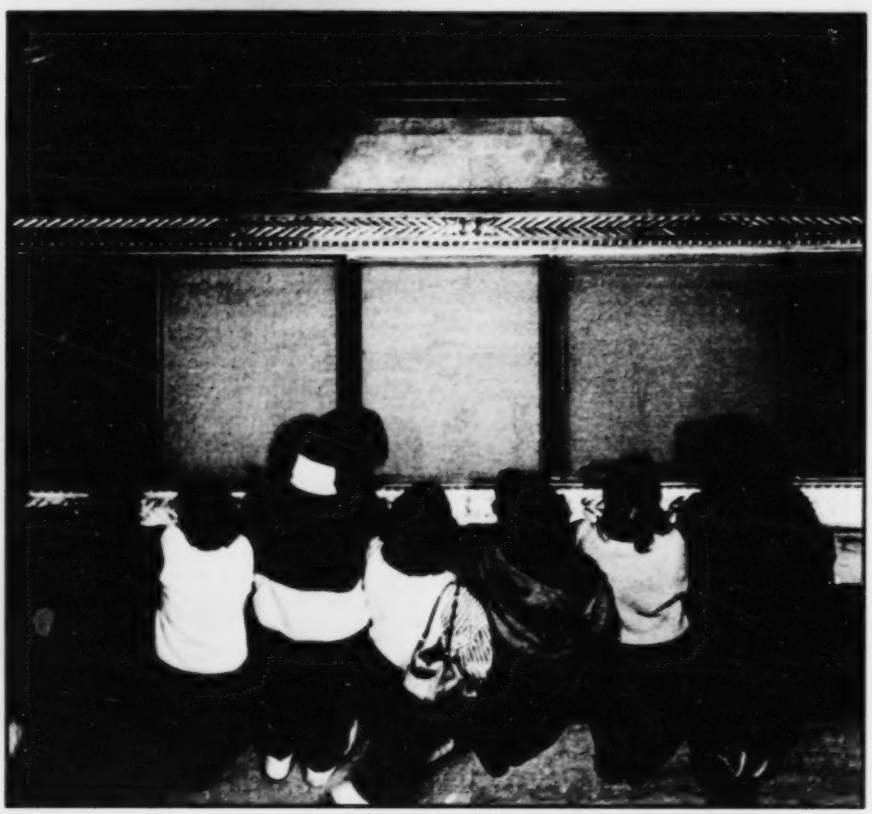
3. Bob Newhart (center) examined Constitutional documents at the Archives.

4. Ralph Nadar visited Exhibition Hall during the bicentennial year.

5. Sugar Ray Leonard proved to be a crowd-pleaser during the 87-hour vigil.

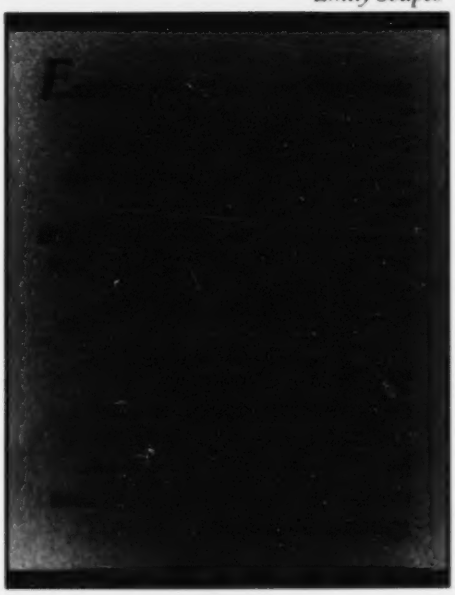
6. Frank Burke greeted Speaker of the House Jim Wright during the bicentennial year.

7. Always popular with schoolchildren, the Constitution was viewed by over a million persons in 1987.



Exhibiting Constitutional Documents

Emily Soapes



The National Archives and Records Administration, with headquarters in Washington, D.C., and field locations across the country, is truly a national institution. During the year of the Constitution's bicentennial, exhibits at several Archives locations were presented to bring citizens closer to their documentary heritage. "The American Experiment: Creating the Constitution," "The American Experiment: Living with the Constitution," and "Would You Have Signed the Constitution?" at the National Archives Building; "'Tis Done! We Have Become a Nation" at many of the Archives' field branches; and "We, the Japanese People" at the Washington National Records Center at Suitland, Maryland, are at widely different locations, but they have a unity of purpose: to increase interest in and understanding of the Constitution through the display of archival holdings.

The Archives used its most visible exhibit space — the bronze cases flanking the Constitution and Declaration of Independence — to respond to keen interest in the bicentennial year in the writing of the Constitution. "The American Experiment: Creating the Constitution" presents a look at the nation's formative years from 1775 to 1791, with a focus on the conception, creation, and early implementation of this charter of our government.

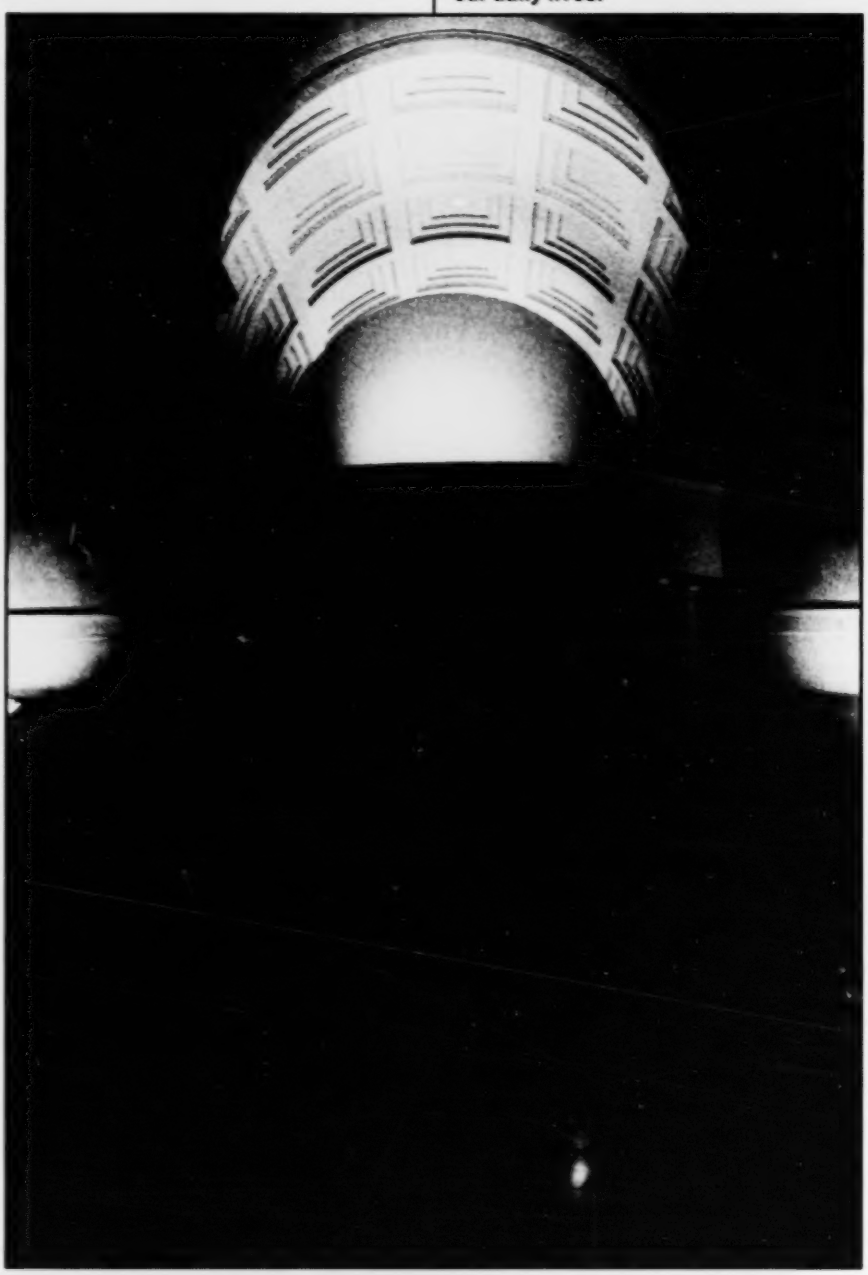
As the home of the permanently valuable records of the U.S. government, the National Archives has in its holdings the great milestone documents that chronicle the beginnings of our government. Examples of these great documents included in "Creating the Constitution" are the first printed version of the Declaration of Independence; the Articles of Confederation; the resolution of the Confederation Congress calling for a convention during the summer of 1787; the Virginia Plan, proposed early in the Constitutional Convention and which served as the basis for the Constitution; a printed draft of the Constitution; and a draft of the Bill of Rights.

But great events are only part of the story of the making of the Constitution. While these documents are important, by themselves they tell very little about the concerns and mood of the general population. To include the point of view of the common man, the curator of "Creating" chose a sampling of documents created by ordinary people. Many of these records have never before been displayed. Concerns of citizens at the time our Constitution was written are shown by such items as a 1785 letter from an eighty-one-year-old woman to the Confederation Congress requesting financial assistance. Her name was Elizabeth Thompson, and she had served at one time as George Washington's housekeeper. Financial problems affected groups of citizens as well, as seen in the minutes of a meeting of Boston merchants in 1779. Frustrated with runaway inflation and with the government's inability to resolve the problem, the merchants took matters into their own hands by freezing prices of certain "necessaries of life" such as tea, rum, molasses, brown sugar, and chocolate.

Also on exhibit is a 1783 anti-slavery petition signed by nearly six hundred Quakers, protesting the institution of slavery on moral grounds even before the debates of the Constitutional Convention. But the public in 1787 did not know the content of the debates in Philadelphia, as seen by an article published in a Massachusetts newspaper on September 5, 1787, that speculated on the work of the convention being conducted behind closed doors.

These documents are fascinating in themselves for what they tell us about daily life in late eighteenth-century America. But the voices of

"The American Experiment" explored ways in which the Constitution affects our daily lives.

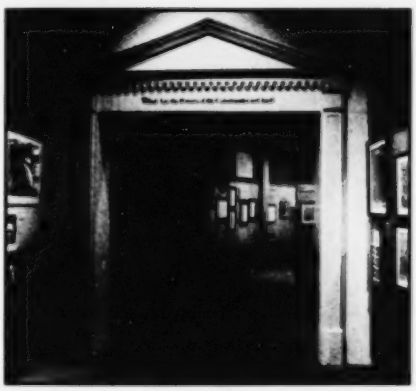


The road to women's suffrage was a highlight of the Archives exhibit. *Inset:* Another section focused on the President and the draft.

these little-known authors also communicate a great deal about the circumstances from which the Constitution emerged: personal financial pressures, frustration at government inability to resolve a pressing economic problem, the slavery controversy already gnawing at the unity of the states, and suspense as the public anxiously awaited disclosure of the convention's work.

More than a million people have viewed "Creating the Constitution" since it opened in October 1986, and the exhibit will remain open until spring 1989. Most of our visitors are not professional historians; many of them have come to the Archives Building only knowing that it contains the nation's Charters of Freedom: the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. Through exhibitions in the Rotunda such as "Creating the Constitution," we hope to provide a historical context through which visitors may better understand the great documents they have come to see.

Many visitors have expressed surprise at certain aspects of the



Top: **Over 25,000 visitors waited their turn to view the Constitution during the 87-hour vigil.**

Bottom: **Executive power is one key issue that the exhibit focused on.**

story of the Constitution presented in "Creating." They were surprised to learn that while the Articles of Confederation were in place, each of the thirteen states retained its sovereignty and independence; that the delegates to the Constitutional Convention were authorized merely to revise the Articles of Confederation, not to create an entirely new plan of government; that the convention as a body agreed to strict rules of secrecy so that the public knew nothing of the specifics of the proposed Constitution until the delegates completed their work on September 17, 1787; at the intricacy of the deliberations that

these little-known authors also communicate a great deal about the circumstances from which the Constitution emerged

led the delegates slowly and painstakingly from conflict to consensus; at the closeness of the ratification contest and at the fears aroused by the creation of a strong

Presidential war powers was another feature of the exhibit.

A computer quiz enabled visitors to vote on Constitutional issues of 1787.

central government; and to learn the little-known fact that Massachusetts ratified the Bill of Rights in 1939 as the nation prepared for the sesquicentennial of the adoption of the first ten amendments.

In creating the Constitution, the founding fathers confronted many difficult choices. An interactive computer display developed and donated by Apple Computer and Scholastic, Inc., allows visitors to the Archives' Rotunda to "vote" on some of the issues of 1787, such as

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... "Living with the Constitution" includes documents from ordinary citizens whose lives are affected by the Constitution.

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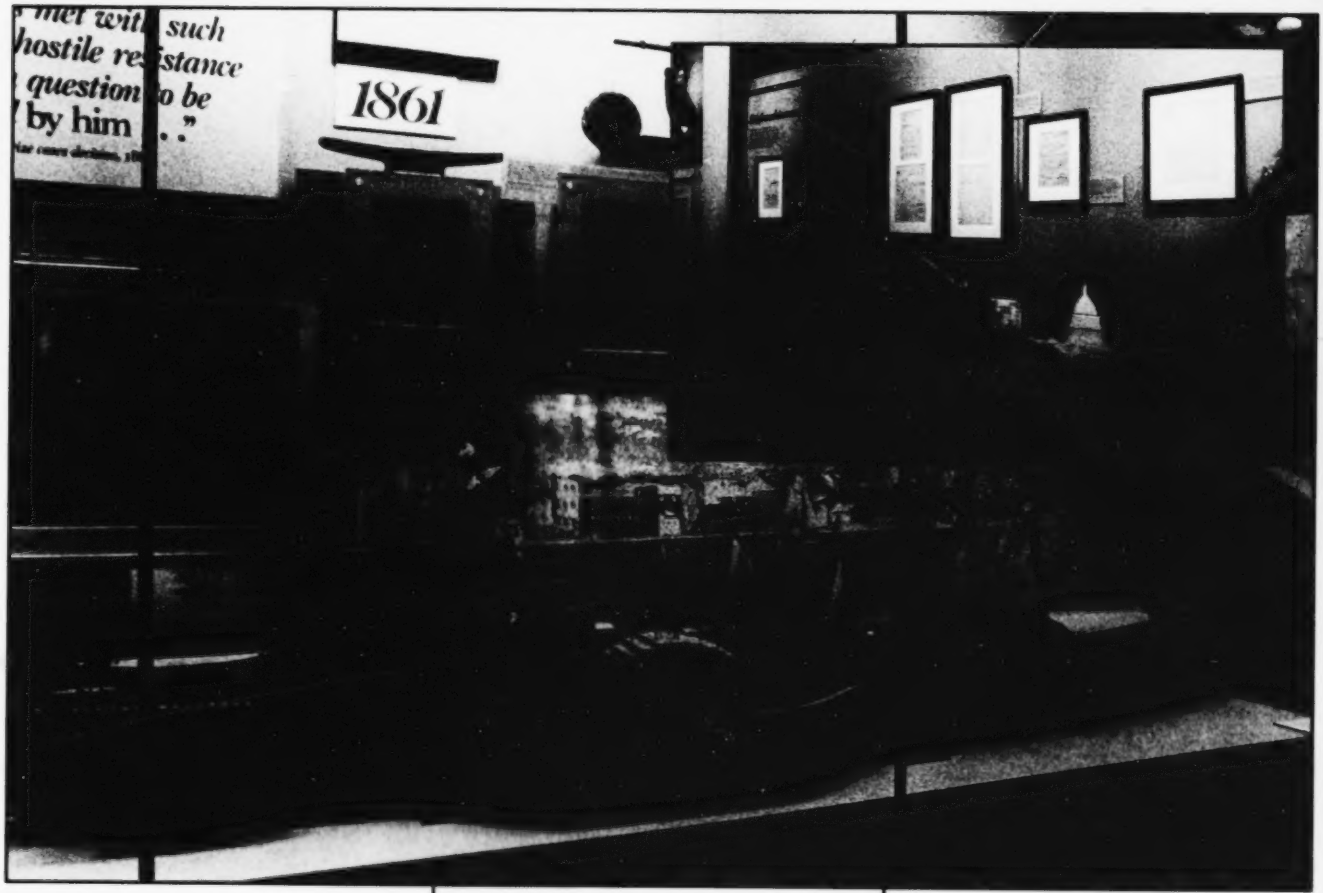
the manner of choosing the President. A copy of the Constitution's preamble appears on the screen, and visitors are invited to use a computerized quill pen to "sign" the Constitution. While the display intrigues visitors of all ages, young people have proven much more computer-literate than their elders, gathering in front of the screen and discussing among themselves the very issues faced in Philadelphia in 1787.

"Would You Have Signed the Constitution?" gives visitors an idea of the difficulty of creating a framework of government. "Creating the Constitution" presents the background for the Constitutional Convention and the beginning of the federal government. While neither is an in-depth study, they are intended to increase our visitors' understanding of the Constitution and some of the issues that have become dominant themes of American history. A larger exhibit in the Archives' Circular Gallery, "Living with the Constitution" more fully explores three of many of these constitutional issues over two hundred years.

To reinforce the theme that the Constitution matters in our daily lives, "Living with the Constitution" examines three constitutional issues persisting throughout our history: who has the right to vote, what are the powers of the commander in chief, and what are the powers of the states and federal government (specifically in school desegregation).

As visitors walk through the Archives' Circular Gallery, they see well-known items from the Archives' vast collection, such as the Nineteenth Amendment giving women the right to vote; the petition of Homer Plessy in the landmark Supreme Court case of *Plessy v. Ferguson*; the joint resolution declaring a state of war between the United States and Germany in World War I; the signed copy of the much-disputed War Powers Resolution, the Fourteenth Amendment, the Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*; and other recognizable great documents in constitutional history.

View of the Exhibition Hall's circular gallery.
Inset: Thomas Nast's engraving, "Uncle Sam's Thanksgiving Dinner," advocated the ratification of the 15th Amendment, 1869.

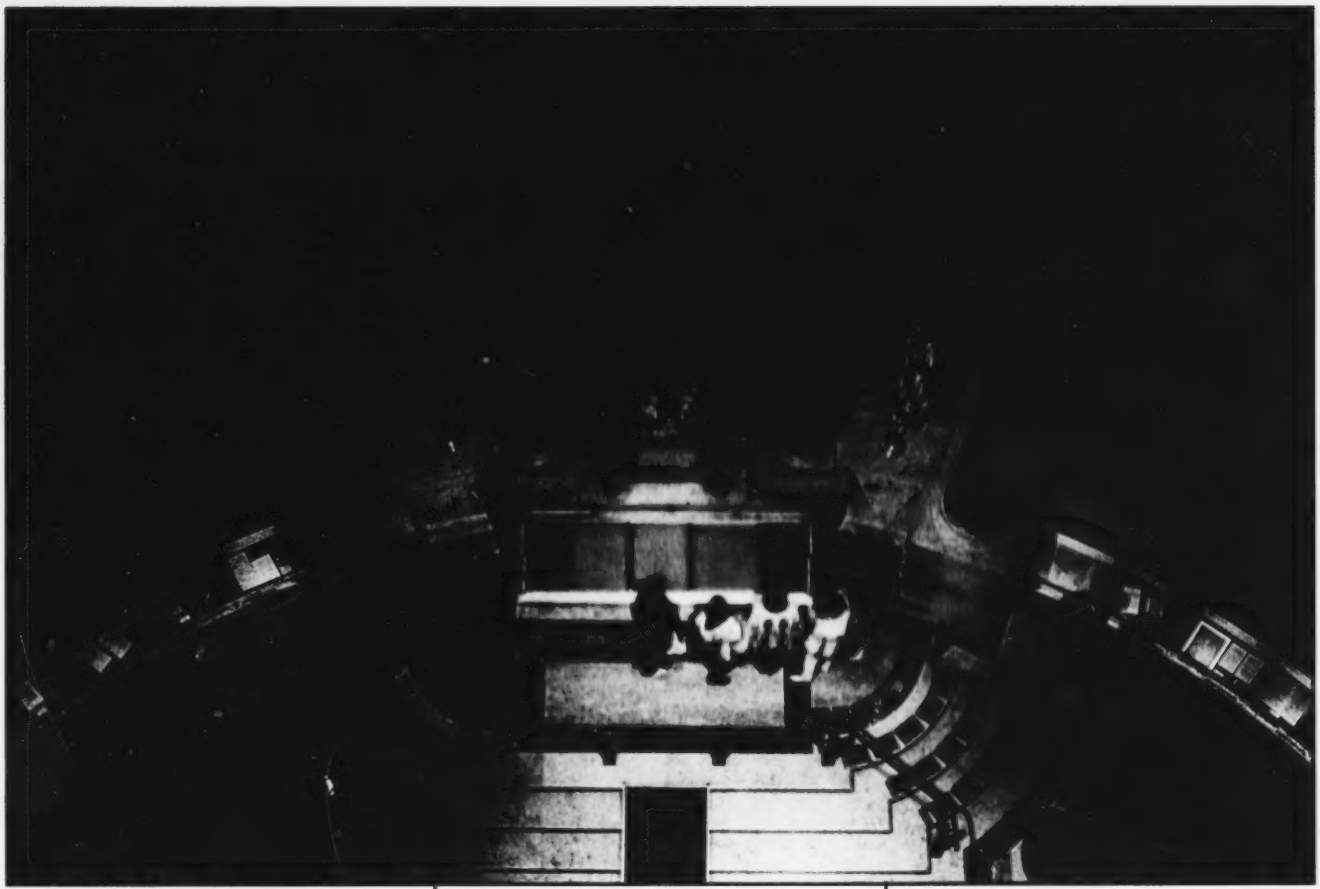


A model of the blockade runner *Dare* is the focal point of this exhibit case concerned with Civil War matters. *Inset:* the KKK intimidated blacks in the South and kept them away from the polls.

But like "Creating the Constitution," "Living with the Constitution" includes documents from ordinary citizens whose lives are affected by the Constitution. For example, a photo of the commander in chief drawing draft numbers is shown next to a photo of young men scanning draft lists during World War I. An actual draft list from the Selective Service records in the Archives' Atlanta branch hangs nearby.

One purpose of exhibits at the Archives is to showcase our diversified holdings . . .

One purpose of exhibits at the Archives is to showcase our diversified collection, and an important part of that collection is the motion picture and sound recording collection. Three audio-visual stations lure video-conscious viewers through "Living with the Constitution." Soon after visitors enter the gallery, they hear the voice of Lyndon Johnson in 1965 as he sends voting rights legislation to Congress "to carry out the [Fifteenth] amendment to the Constitution." "It is wrong to deny Americans their right to vote" because of the color of their skin, the president asserts. Visitors also see and hear the government's contemporary (1943) explanation of why the power of the commander in chief has been used to intern Japanese-Americans during World War II, an action now recognized to have violated those citizens' rights. And they view a 1963 film of the confrontation between the state and federal governments, in which Governor George Wallace decries



Viewed from 75 feet above the floor of the Rotunda, this shrine houses America's most important and cherished documents.

. . . other carefully examined items are a nine-foot model of a Civil War blockade runner and U.S. Marshals' nightsticks . . .

"the unwelcomed, unwarranted, and force-induced intrusion" of the "might and power of the central government" at the University of Alabama. At this video station more than any other, parents often stop to explain to their children a historical event that they remember.

Ever-present fingerprints on the exhibit cases in "Living with the Constitution" tell us that other carefully examined items are a nine-foot model of a Civil War blockade runner (in "What are the powers of the commander in chief?") and U.S. Marshals' nightsticks from Little Rock and a mannequin dressed in fatigues like those worn by federal troops in Little Rock (both in "What are the powers of the state and federal governments?"). These and other items were borrowed from institutions around the country for the exhibition. "Living with the Constitution" opened in April 1987 and will be on display until September 1988.

But not everyone could come to Washington to see original documents or to use a computer simulation. To meet the needs of local groups for bicentennial commemorations, the Archives developed a facsimile exhibit entitled, "'Tis Done! We Have Become a Nation." Making copies of well-known, important documents widely accessible, "'Tis Done" reproduces landmark documents

that led to the writing and ratification of the Constitution, such as the resolve of the Confederation Congress calling for the convention in Philadelphia, the New Jersey Plan, the resolve of the convention regarding ratification, and the Senate draft of the Bill of Rights. This popular set of twenty poster-sized document reproductions with captions has proven useful to schools, libraries, local historical societies, and other organizations nationwide.

To publicize the existence of the National Archives field branches, the Field Archives Division sponsored displays of modified versions of the "'Tis Done" exhibit at the branches in Boston, New York, Chicago, Kansas City, Fort Worth, and Denver. To more broadly disseminate the word about the field branches, many of the branches sponsored poster displays at other public locations as varied as the rotunda of the New Jersey State Capitol, Texas Christian University Library, the U.S. District Court in Kansas City, Missouri, and the Gerald R. Ford Amphitheater in Vail, Colorado.

Even when the bicentennial is over, the "'Tis Done" poster exhibit will still be available for sale through the Archives' Marketing and Fulfillment Branch (NEPS), and the field branches will continue to circulate their version to stops such as the New Hampshire State Archives (sponsored by the Archives' Boston branch).

Taking an international approach to constitutional studies, the Archives also produced an exhibit entitled "We, the Japanese People: U.S. Influences on Japan's Constitution" at our Washington National Records Center in Suitland, Maryland. The audience at Suitland consists of National Archives staff and researchers, many of whom come to the facility for specific research in twentieth-century records. Using the records of the Supreme Command Allied Powers (SCAP), which are housed in the Suitland center, the exhibit tells the story of the constitution-making process in post-World War II Japan.

SCAP staff under Gen. Douglas MacArthur wrote a constitution for Japan in a week's time as part of the "reconstruction" of Japan. Highlights of the exhibit include reproductions of the Potsdam Proclamation, urging Japan to surrender; the Japanese authorization of the surrender; SWNCC 228, the Army's major policy document guiding the occupation; and the emperor's proclamation announcing the new constitution. "We, the Japanese People" opened in November 1986 and will remain at the records center in Suitland indefinitely.

the Field Archives Division sponsored displays of modified versions of the "'Tis Done" exhibit

The National Personnel Records Center created a unique exhibit using posters from several sources.

Even though they contain important documents on the two-hundred-year-old story of the Constitution, there is much more to tell than "Creating the Constitution," "Living with the Constitution," or "'Tis Done! We Have Become a Nation" can accomplish. "'Tis Done" highlights a few milestone documents from the period in which the United States became a nation. "Creating the Constitution" and "Living with the Constitution" touch on some issues that have become dominant themes of American history: the role of the central government versus the role of the state governments, the concern for civil liberties, the perpetuity of the Union, and the operation of representative government accountable to the people. For two hundred years Americans have had the liberty under the Constitution to debate these issues, a fact the National Archives celebrated in 1987.

Contributors: Stacey Bredhoff, Rosanne Butler, Claudia Nicholson

1

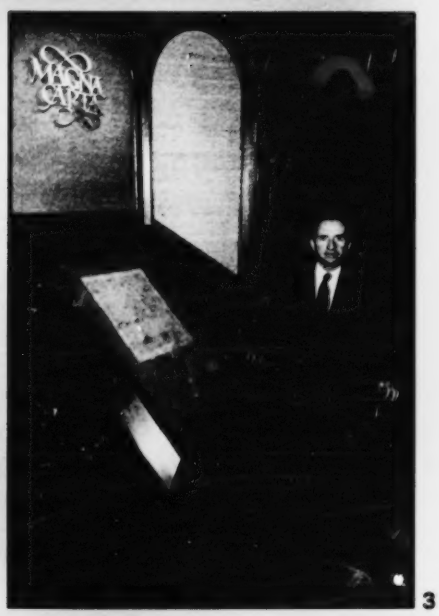
1. Copies of National Archives posters adorned a San Francisco library.

2. The NARA poster exhibit appeared in lobbies across the nation.

3. Ross Perot's loan of a Magna Carta added luster to the Archives' Constitutional exhibits.

4. The Washington Records Center featured a look at the Japanese Constitution.

2



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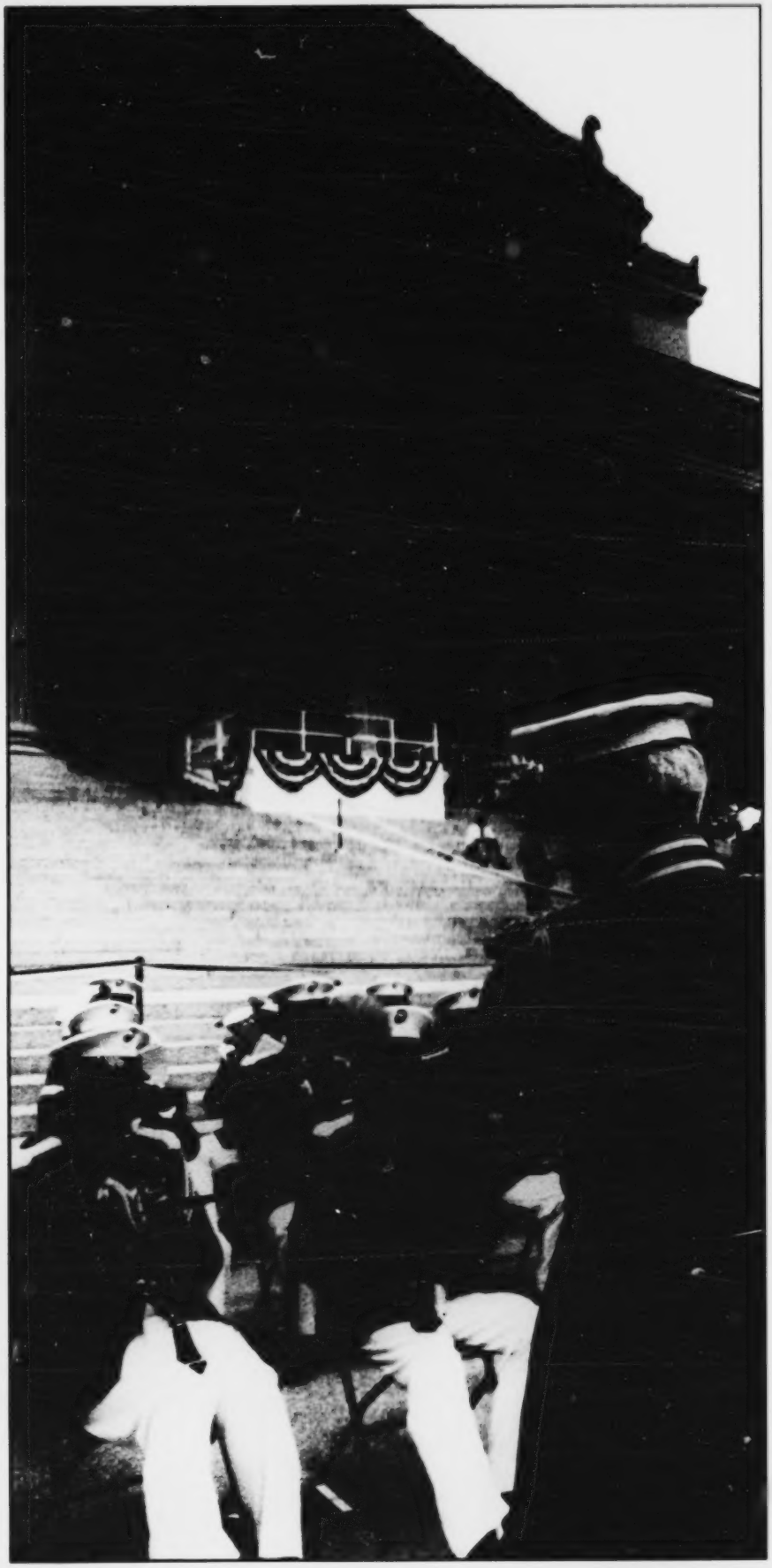
Celebrating a Special Anniversary

Wayne Cook

Celebration, dedication, and education — public events at the National Archives stressed these themes during the bicentennial of the United States Constitution. The National Archives, permanent home of the great charter, provided a focus for activities in the nation's capital. These activities complemented those held not only in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where the framers signed the Constitution, but also in other parts of America, where millions celebrated the blessings of and dedicated themselves to the principles embodied in this historic document.

Public events at the National Archives also promoted an understanding of the U.S. Constitution and, in the words of James Madison, its "numerous innovations displayed on the American theatre, in favor of private rights and public happiness." In this respect, the public events complemented the film series, educational programs, conferences, and exhibitions sponsored by the National Archives.

Three years of planning helped the National Archives target a diverse nationwide audience — one that outnumbered the population of the thirteen states joined by the 1787 Confederation by about one hundred times. To meet this objective, events took place not only in the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C., but also in the agency's



presidential libraries, field archives branches, and federal records centers across the nation.

Public events at the National Archives reached a climax on September 17, Constitution Day; but well before then the National Archives began contributing much to the nation's bicentennial effort as well as building momentum for the agency's own 87-Hour Vigil.

more than one thousand radio stations requested the agency's "Bicentennial Daily Digests"

For example, the National Archives helped the Commission on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, the Smithsonian Institution, We the People 200, Philadelphia 200, Project '87, Walt Disney World, and other public and private groups to plan activities. The National Archives Building also provided an appropriate setting for meetings and receptions held from 1985 through 1987.

Meanwhile, the National Archives generated nationwide interest in the bicentennial. In the spring, for instance, more than one thousand radio stations requested the agency's "Bicentennial Daily Digests," which summarized proceedings of the Constitutional Convention. Some digests made it into print, courtesy of the Champion International Corporation, the world's largest carton-converting manufacturer, which produces 300-350 million half-gallon milk cartons monthly.

U.S. Marine Corps Band ceremoniously helped to usher in the 87-hour vigil, the capstone of National Archives bicentennial celebrations.

Drummer, U.S. Army, 3d Infantry Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps.

The National Archives Public Affairs Office eagerly sought other sources of publicity as well. For example, photographs, ideas, and information provided by this office soon contributed to features in *Time, National Geographic, Newsweek, American Heritage, Smithsonian, Life, Daughters of the American Revolution Magazine, Southern Living, The New York Times, The Washington Post,* and *The Washington Post Magazine.* The background, effects, and preservation of the U.S. Constitution were among the topics covered.

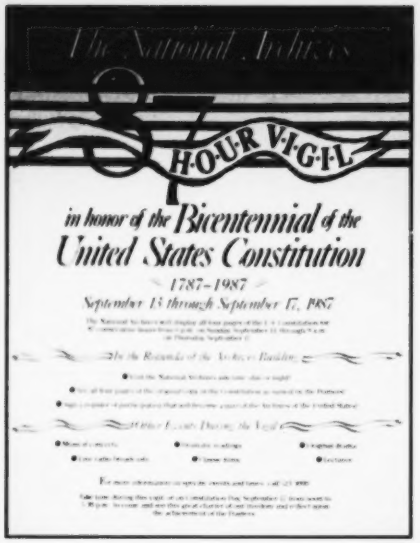
Gregory Peck, working with CBS, and Peter Jennings, David Brinkley, and Ted Koppel of ABC visited the National Archives Building to produce documentaries that would be televised during the 87-Hour Vigil. The Public Broadcasting System also relied heavily on National Archives resources. "In Search of the Constitution," Bill Moyers's twelve-part series, filmed portions of the show inside the Exhibition Hall. PBS premiered its bicentennial minutes inside the hall, too. On September 10 the National Archives theater provided the first showing of a television special narrated by Carl Rowan, "Search for Justice: Three American Stories," which featured a rare interview with Justice Thurgood Marshall.

Through the museum shop and sales by mail, the National Archives conducted a brisk trade in bicentennial memorabilia. A special flyer, *Celebrating the Constitution,* listed numerous items, including books, posters, T-shirts, sweatshirts, mugs, totebags, scarves, videocassettes, and films. Free memorabilia included a braille edition of the Constitution.

During the vigil, the public could view all four pages of the U.S. Constitution.

The variety of merchandise might even have astonished Benjamin Franklin, one of the most inventive delegates of 1787. No doubt America's first postmaster general would have been pleased, too, with a special ceremony on August 28. In the Exhibition Hall of the National Archives, agency officials joined the U.S. Postal Service in unveiling a series of five stamps commemorating the bicentennial and featuring portions of the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution.

By early September, the nation's capital still sweltered under high humidity, a main obstacle the framers of the Constitution had faced in 1787. As the rain fell, however, three years of planning



Constitution Avenue steps, and even the lawn had repeated bookings.

Special flyers, posters, press releases, messages on radio and television, advertisements in newspapers and magazines, and features in *Prologue* and the National Archives monthly *Calendar of Events* all promoted the vigil. Only hours before the vigil started, messages also flashed across the electronic billboard at Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium. Appropriately, the game opening the football season featured the Eagles from Philadelphia, where the Constitution was signed, and the Redskins

Top Left: **The National Archives celebrated the Constitution's 200th birthday in an 87-hour vigil.**

Top right: **Continental Color Guard, U.S. Army, 3d Infantry outside the Constitution Avenue entrance.**

Bottom: **Panorama of the Exhibition Hall depicting the Faulkner Murals.**

culminated in the bicentennial activities of the 87-Hour Vigil.

Beginning at 6:00 p.m. on September 13 and ending at 9:00 a.m. on September 17, the vigil encompassed eighty-seven hours in which the National Archives Building remained open continuously. During the vigil, the public could view all four pages of the U.S. Constitution, two of which normally remain in the vault except on each September 17. The vigil also included numerous special events leading to the Constitution Day ceremony on the seventeenth. The main theater, the Archivist's Reception Room, the Rotunda, the

from Washington, D.C., where the great charter is housed. The home team won.

At a formal ceremony preceding the vigil, the U.S. Army Third Infantry Continental Color Guard and Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps provided historic flavor. The U.S. Marine Band played rousing music. Black limousines whisked in special guests. Bicycles, strollers, and running shoes brought in fellow citizens. Representives of the three branches of government spoke at the ceremony. Joining Dr. Frank G. Burke, Acting Archivist of the United States were the Honorable Lewis Powell, Associate Justice of

87 — HOUR VIGIL:
NATIONAL TRIBUTE TO THE CONSTITUTION
SEPTEMBER 13-17, 1987

Name	Hometown
John C. Stennis	DeKalb, Miss.
Lewis F. Powell Jr.	Richmond, Va.
Daniel J. Boorstin	Washington, D.C.
Ruth F. Boorstin	Washington, D.C.
Josephine R. Powell	Richmond, Virginia
Francis S. Burke	New York
Hildegard W. Burke	Berlin, Germany
Esther Ferguson	New York City
[illegible]	New York, NY
Wenneld L. Anderson	Washington, D. C.
Katherine Davalos Ortega	Alamogordo, New Mexico
Suzanne Nunez Howard	El Centro, California
Mark Clement	VERO BEACH, FLORIDA
Janet E Pope	Kuwait City, Kuwait
Charles E. Higgins	Reno, Nevada
Betty J. Higgins	Reno, Nev.
Judith Wolfe Miller	Bethesda, Md.
Jean Brockenbrough Jakes	Fairfax, Va.
Robert A. Jakes Jr.	Fairfax, VA
Maria E. Davis	Metairie, LA
Margaret Bennett Brozen	Chevy Chase, MD
Richard Brozen	Chevy Chase, MD
Thomas E. McNeely	Alexandria, Va.
Patricia R. El-Ashry	Lansing, IL
Diane Francesconi Lyon	Chicago, Illinois

Visitors had a chance to affix their names to a document that will be preserved permanently at the Archives.

the Supreme Court (retired), and Honorable John C. Stennis, President Pro Tempore of the U.S. Senate.

A special reception featuring the U.S. Marine Band String Quartet further brightened spirits, honoring two hundred distinguished guests, associates, and benefactors of the National Archives. The privately financed reception represented one of many ways the government and citizens joined in celebrating the bicentennial.

The vigil quickly gained momentum and attracted enormous crowds. Visitors arrived early in the morning, and long lines formed down the Constitution Avenue steps of the National Archives Building and along the sidewalk. About 6:00 a.m., joggers from the Mall would swell the lines.

Inside the Exhibition Hall, Girl Scouts slapped stickers on pocket-size editions of the Constitution, passed out these free souvenirs, and maintained a special register, which was later deposited in the National Archives, recording for posterity the names and home city and state or country of vigil participants. Some visitors added their own messages. Among the unusual entries was this lament: "Laila Arnaoot wanted to be here but she had home work, McLean, VA."

Sight of the U.S. Constitution awed most visitors. Some pored over the great charter, reading most of its content. Others reverently but briefly eyed the document. For many, the pilgrimage included a

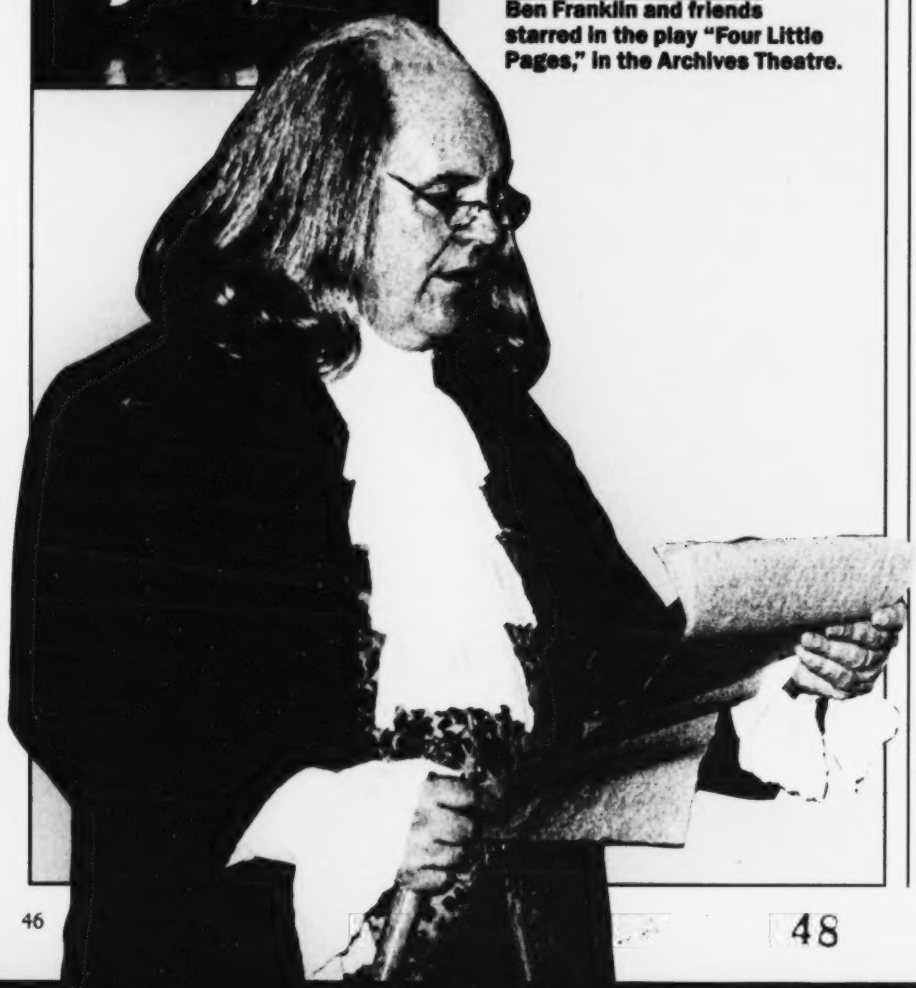
Above: **The news media covered the bicentennial events at the National Archives.**

Left: **Girl Scouts ensured that visitors signed the register and received copies of the Constitution to take home.**

Below: **Dressed in colonial garb, a town crier and companion posed before columns at the Archives.**

Creation of the Constitution was recreated in a live drama at the Archives, "Gallant and Lawless Act."

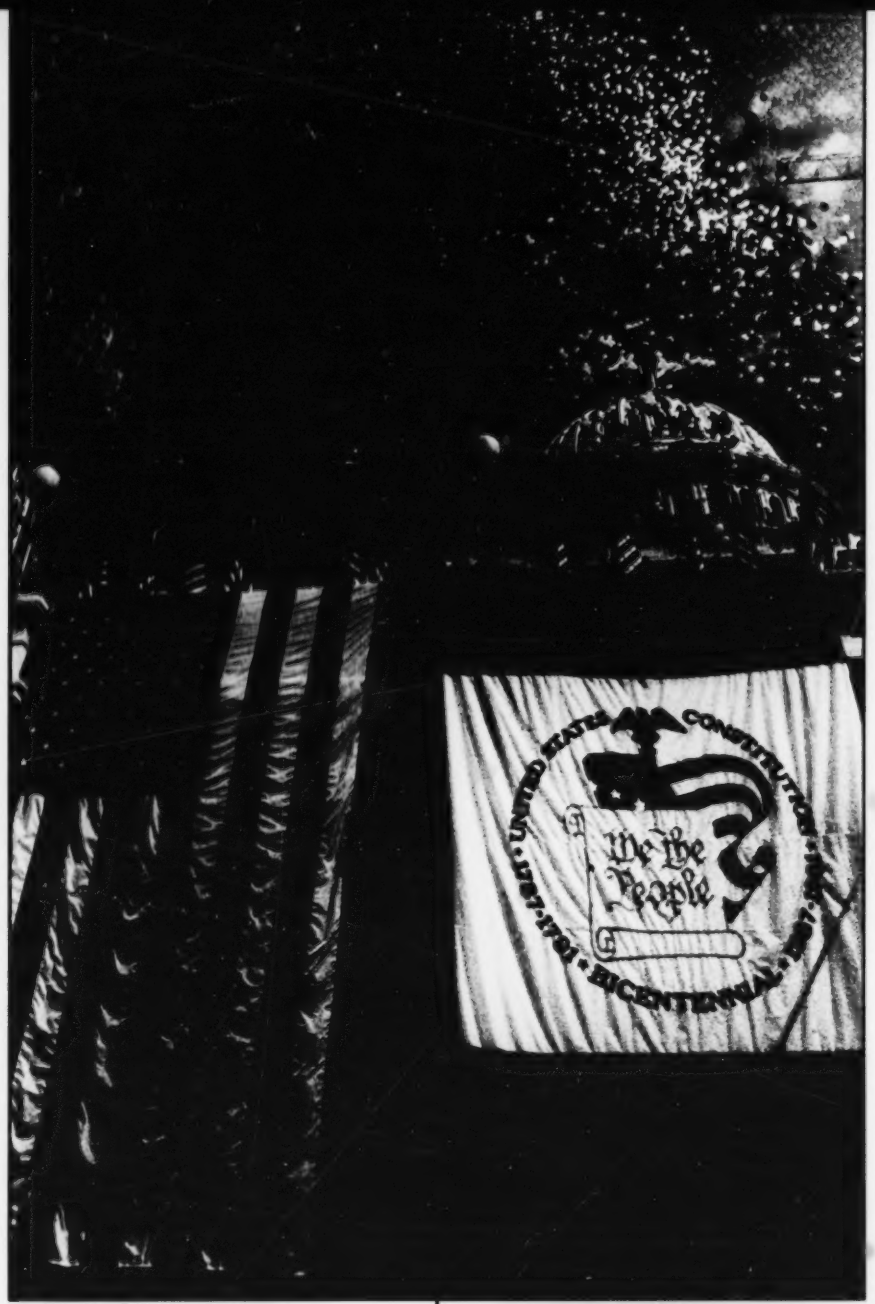
Ben Franklin and friends starred in the play "Four Little Pages," in the Archives Theatre.



visit to the museum shop and the circular gallery, site of the bicentennial exhibition "The American Experiment: Living with the Constitution."

One visitor, bemoaning the three-hour wait, suggested that the National Archives should have used a conveyor belt to move the crowds along. The man next in line protested: "I came from Iowa to see the Constitution, and I'll never be here again. I don't want to be hurried." The Archives staff agreed. Another reason for the long lines was that many people thought all four pages of the Constitution were on public display only once every one or two hundred years, not annually. Some people, of course, might miss the tricentennial.

Flanked by guards, the shrine in the Exhibition Hall shone brightly under the golden lights. Joint Service Military Honor Guards, tall and erect, stood in the front, barely even blinking. Other honor guards from various Washington area security forces and even one group



The crowds always hushed during the changing of the guard.

Left: **Some of the festivities took place at the Capitol.**

Below: **Ceremonial Honor Guards set a high profile during the vigil.**

Bottom: **Colonial Cotillion of Alexandria performed during the 87-hour vigil.**

Watching an honor guard standing motionlessly, one child asked: "Is that man real?" Many visitors asked the same question about the great charter they had come to view. Miracles are sometimes hard to believe. To be certain, one skeptic spent about twenty minutes comparing words in the charter to those in the pocket-size reproduction he had received at the door.

of Boy Scouts also stood watch over the document.

Although the lines often thickened and noisy flocks of school children passed through, solemnity usually prevailed. The crowds always hushed during the changing of the guard. The replacements, with silent precision, entered the Exhibition Hall. Heel clicks ricocheted off the marble walls while chills ran through the audience and pulses quickened.

The vigil, of course, had its lighter moments, too. One blessing of liberty is unrestrained mirth.

Touch-screen computers added a modern touch to the vigil. Visitors could answer questions about the Constitution and choose the best reason cited in the Preamble for adopting the great charter. About 37 percent, including voters in the regional archives branches, chose the "blessings of liberty." The least popular reason, cited by only 5 percent, was to "provide for the common defence."

Another special computer exhibit also asked visitors whether or not they would have voted for the Constitution. Whereas the 1787 delegates used quill pens, their modern-day counterparts voted with a computer "mouse." By a vote of 5,537 to 1,717, the participants approved the Constitution. Was the opposition unpatriotic? No. After all, the absence of a bill of rights had disturbed many Americans in 1787, and some of the most prominent signers had thought the original document had its faults, such as letting slavery continue.

During the vigil, the National Archives Building hummed with activity outside the Exhibition Hall. The public could hear freedom sing, courtesy of the Potomac Harmony Chorus, Singing Capital Chorus, and the Vienna-Falls Chorus, International. The Colonial Cotillion of Alexandria, in period costume, instructed audiences in the minuet as well as in practical and coquettish use of the fan. To honor the world's oldest written national constitution, Sugar Ray Leonard, world boxing champion, made a personal appearance and spoke of the responsibilities of citizenship. Films and lectures augmented the potpourri.

Three plays commissioned a year before and based on National Archives records offered insight into the U.S. Constitution. "Gallant and Lawless Act" provided a fast-paced, amusing look at serious issues confronting the framers. "Most Gracious Wit" focused on the suspension of *habeas corpus* during the

Civil War. "Red Spiderweb" spun a tale about communist hunts during the 1920s. All three plays, part of a regular program of theater workshops and presentations, were mounted elsewhere after the bicentennial celebration at the Archives.

The vigil also included a "Constitutional Relay Run" initiated by the U.S. Army. Flanked by Marion Barry, mayor of the District of Columbia, Dr. Burke presented copies of the U.S. Constitution to Secretary of the Army John Marsh. Runners rushed the copies to various cities in Virginia, ending at Fort Monroe in Hampton. About 175 years ago, the original document also had endured a hasty horseback trip to Virginia shortly before the British burned the capital city during the War of 1812. In 1987 the relay symbolized a purpose of the vigil — bringing the Constitution to the people.

On September 16 the vigil activities overlapped with those of Citizenship Day, which was primarily sponsored by the Commission on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution. Thousands of federal employees crowded the grounds of the U.S. Capitol to observe a special ceremony honoring the Constitution. The highlight of the nationally televised event at the Capitol was the pledge of allegiance, led by President Ronald Reagan. Those waiting in line to enter the Exhibition Hall saw themselves on television as the ABC network set up a live remote camera at the National Archives. In the National Archives Building, Citizenship Day ended when Dr. Burke presented awards and prizes to Dennis Means and Mary Rephlo, National Archives employees who scored the highest on two quizzes that tested knowledge of constitutional issues and trivia.

As Constitution Day approached, publicity intensified. The great charter soon competed with politics and scandals as front-page

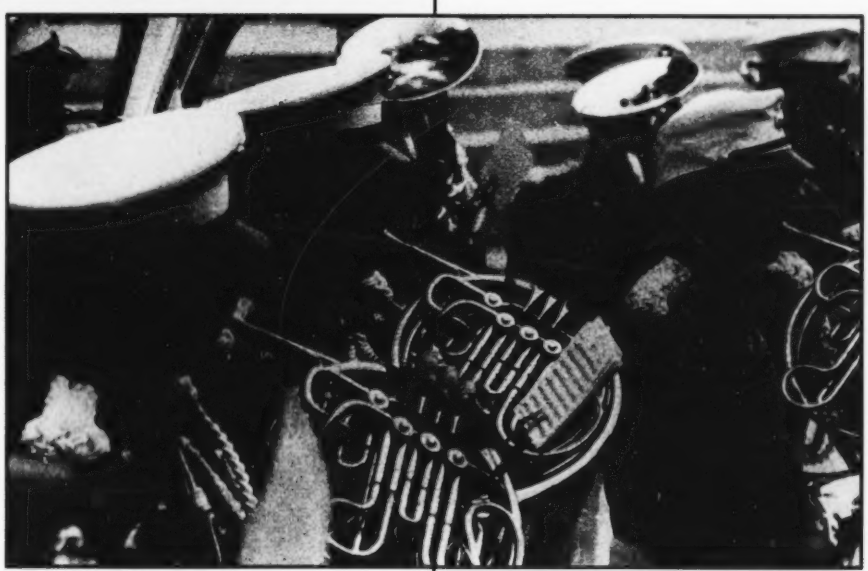
Left: **A naturalization ceremony was held in the Rotunda on September 17.**

Below: **The Marine band proved to be a colorful addition to the festivities.**

news and suppertime topics. Nationally televised documentaries included "Blessings of Liberty" and "We the People 200: The Constitutional Gala." Both included views of the U.S. Constitution and the Exhibition Hall. Canadian, Swedish, Spanish, and Australian television networks also covered this historic anniversary.

Television commentators who covered the vigil included Dan Rather, Peter Jennings, and Richard Threlkeld. Alan Calmes, chief preservation officer of the National Archives, also gained fame. In a C-Span interview conducted in July and aired during the vigil, he explained the advanced technology for monitoring the condition of the U.S. Constitution and ensuring its preservation.

On radio, the "Larry King Show" included an interview with Dr. Burke and Joel Grey inside the Exhibition Hall. "Morning in America" featured Dr. Burke and Norvell Jones, chief of the Document Conservation Branch. The British Broadcasting Company immortalized and internationalized the words of National Archives staff members Linda Brown and Ralph Pollock, a volunteer docent, while other stations interviewed Milton



Gustafson and Claudia Nicholson.

The end of the 87-Hour Vigil was near. More than twenty-five thousand persons had already participated, including visitors from all fifty states and sixty-one countries. Large crowds, however, still awaited a glimpse of the great charter.

As 9:00 a.m. approached, James Megronigle, Acting Assistant Archivist for Management and Administration, selected the three visitors who would be the last participants in the vigil. The three were Patricia Adams and her daughters Lauren and Meredith. Meredith, aged 10, was the last to sign the register of visitors. Mr. Adams, owner of a hog farm in Snow Hill, North Carolina, was busy lobbying on Capitol Hill, seeking a more perfect legislative proposal.

Though the vigil ended, the day was becoming even more special — not just in the United States but in other nations, many of which had adopted large parts of our Constitution. Dark clouds disappeared from over the capital, and sunshine ushered in guests to a special ceremony — the naturalization ceremony, highlight of the two-

The naturalization ceremony, though an annual event each September 17, had a special meaning in 1987.

Below: **The Postal Service issued Constitution Commemorative stamps.**

Below right: **Hon. Barbara Jordan spoke at the naturalization ceremony.**

hundredth anniversary celebration of the signing of the U.S. Constitution.

The naturalization ceremony, though an annual event each September 17, had a special meaning in 1987. Eyes gravitated toward the shrine, the shiny bronze cases that display America's most precious, historic documents. On this day especially, the shrine served to unite all, regardless of diverse religions and national origins. The first page of the U.S. Constitution occupied the highest case, facing the audience and temporarily replacing the Declaration of Independence, the object of a bicentennial celebration eleven years ago.

In black robes, the Honorable Harold H. Greene, judge of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, presided. He administered the oath of allegiance to twenty-five newly naturalized citizens. The Acting Archivist, Dr. Frank G. Burke, emphasized the historic significance of the occasion and addressed the daily, long-term significance of the National Archives in preserving our rights. He then introduced the featured speaker, the Honorable Barbara Jordan, former congresswoman from Texas and currently a professor at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, University of Texas at Austin.

What a superb choice. The framers had compromised on slavery and never even mentioned the word in the Constitution; and national suffrage for women had to wait until 1920, with the Nineteenth Amendment. In 1787, the existence of states west of the Mississippi were vague concepts in the framers' minds. Yet on September 17, a black woman from Texas addressed the merits of the U.S. Constitution.

Noted for candor and intelligence, Ms. Jordan, in a rich, resonant voice, acknowledged the

framers' need for compromises, including on the slavery issue, as a temporary price for a more perfect union. She lauded the framers' passion for freedom. Their work, she argued, had "unmatched importance in the history of mankind."

The National Archives videotaped the message for later viewing, but it already had made a lasting impression. Who could dispute Ms. Jordan's conclusion that the Constitution was "not just a lifeless piece of paper" but "alive and well in America"? No doubt this development would have pleased James Madison. For in his *Federalist* No. 48, the founder of the theory of pluralism had predicted that a "mere demarcation on parchment" would not be a sufficient guard against a concentration of power or against tyranny.

At noon, following the naturalization ceremony, the U.S. Army Field Band and Soldiers' Chorus rekindled patriotic spirit, and the U.S. Constitution continued to draw crowds. By late afternoon the humidity was oppressive. Blinding sun glared off the white marble Constitution Avenue steps, but lines lengthened until 5:00 p.m. when Exhibition Hall finally closed its doors. Later that evening, a privately financed reception attracted approximately five hundred invited guests to celebrate the two hundredth anniversary of the signing of the Constitution. Entertainment was provided by the U.S. Army Field Band String Quartet.

To accommodate the public, the National Archives decided to keep all four pages of the Constitution on display through Sunday, September 20. During that period, more than 11,500 additional persons visited the Exhibition Hall. In one week, a total of about 37,500 persons had visited the National Archives — an estimated 60 percent of them for the first time.

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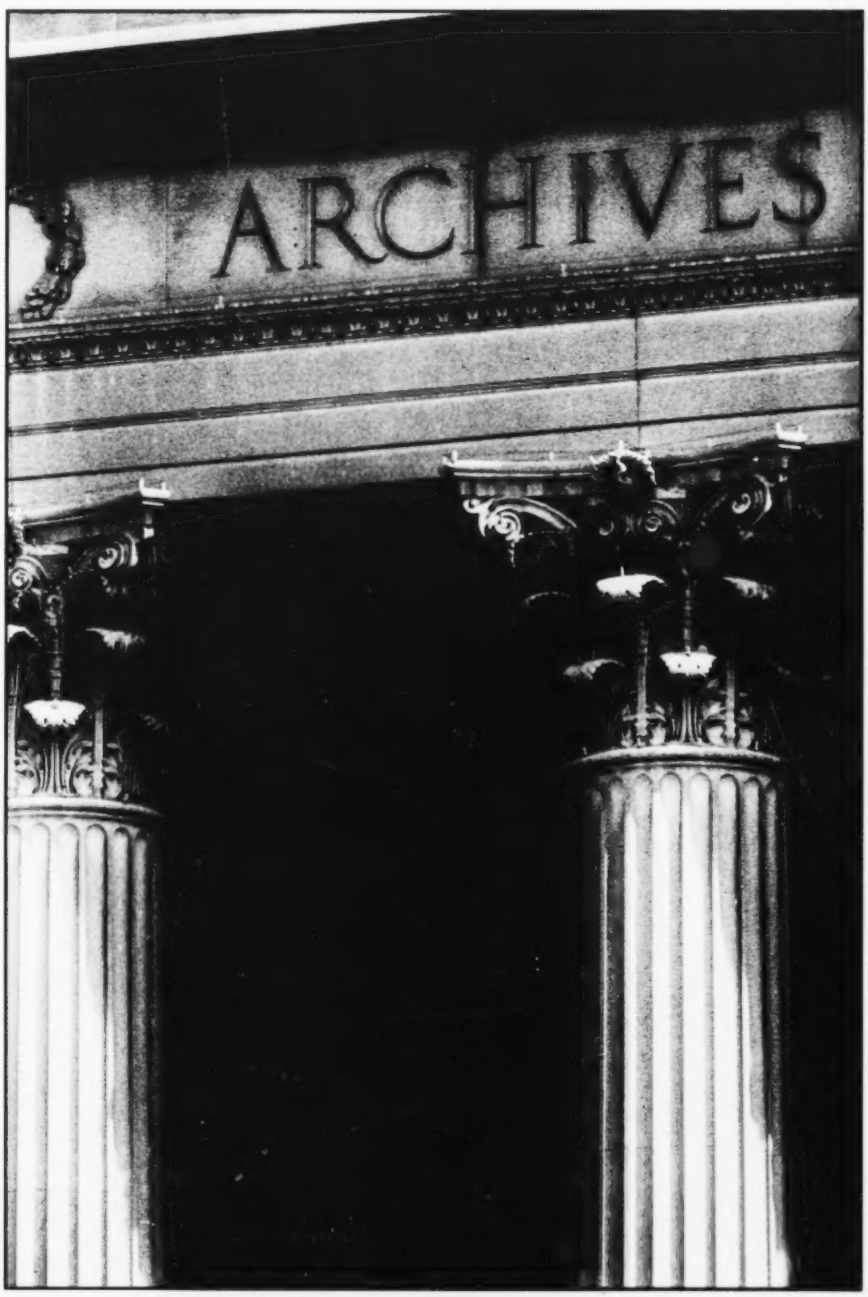
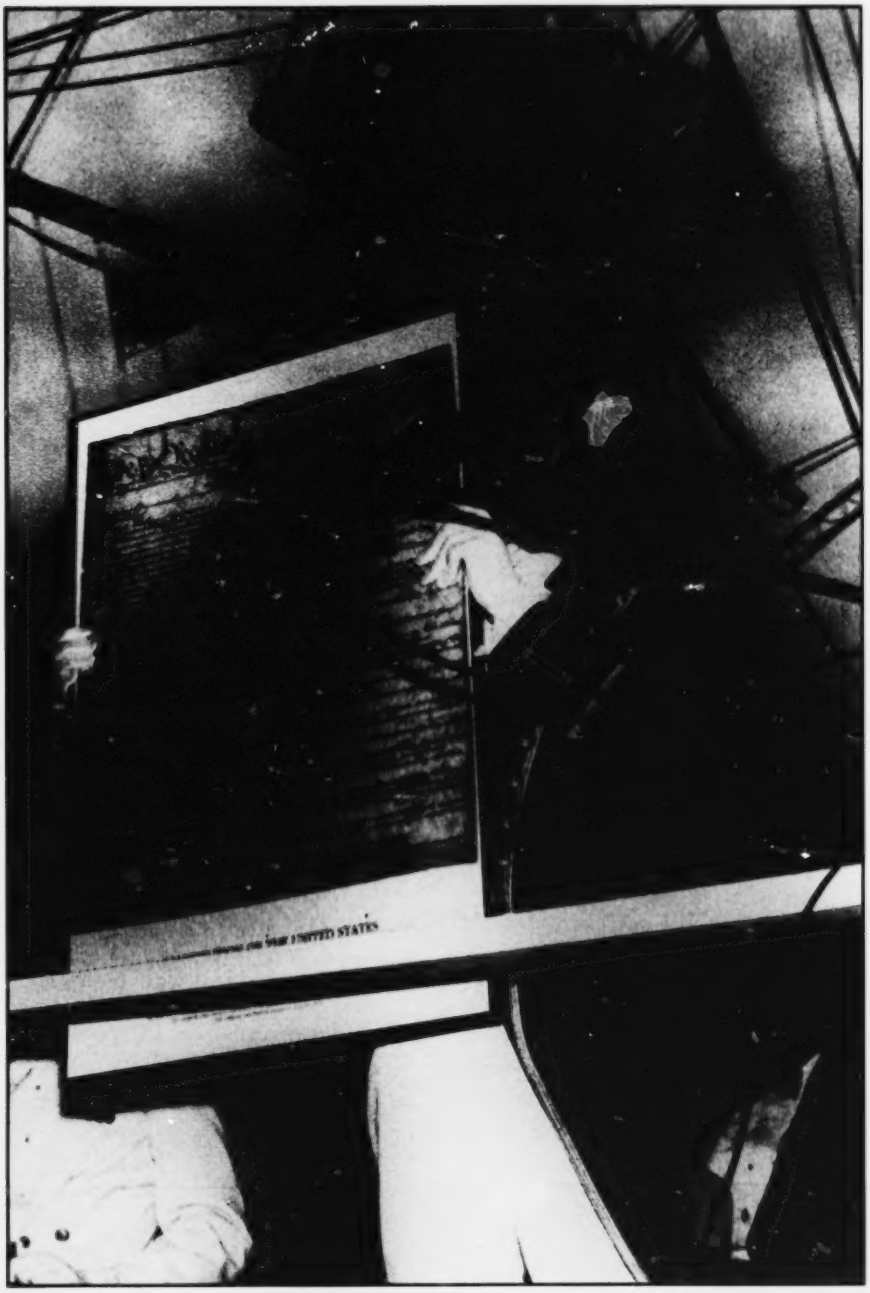


Capt. David Cashman raised the Constitution high on board the USS *Constitution* in Boston Harbor.



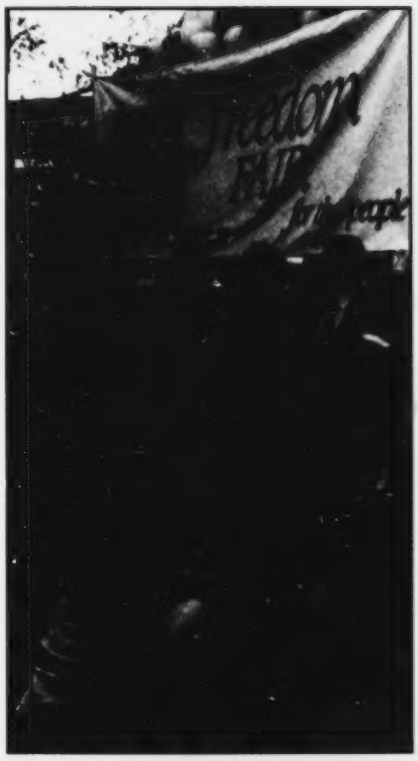
While bicentennial events at the National Archives Building, especially the 87-Hour Vigil, were an outstanding success, Americans outside the capital celebrated the bicentennial, too. The staffs of the National Archives regional archives branches, federal records centers (FRCs), and presidential libraries contributed much to this nationwide observance, giving new meaning to the slogan, "You Don't Have to Go to Washington, D.C., to Visit the National Archives."

Throughout the bicentennial celebration, the field offices sought maximum publicity for their local events and the nationwide observance. For example, the regional archives branches played a key role in soliciting radio sponsors for the agency's "Bicentennial Daily Digests." These branches and other field offices also prominently displayed specially designed patriotic banners, created speakers' bureaus, and arranged television and radio coverage of upcoming events.

Most field offices either held their own public events or spearheaded cooperative efforts with Federal Executive Boards and other federal agencies. The results reflected the diversity of America as well as the colorful imaginations of National Archives employees.

As Constitution Day approached, field offices sponsored open houses, craft shows, stamp exhibits, plays, and essay contests. These offices also displayed touch-screen computers, polling and quizzing the public on the Constitution. Some parents hesitated to touch the computers until children demonstrated their adult-proof safety.

Visits made by Dr. Frank Burke helped build grassroots enthusiasm. For three important reasons Dr. James B. Rhoads joined the team in Seattle, Washington: He had joined the National Archives on the very day in 1952 when it received the Constitution from the Library of Congress, he was Archivist of the



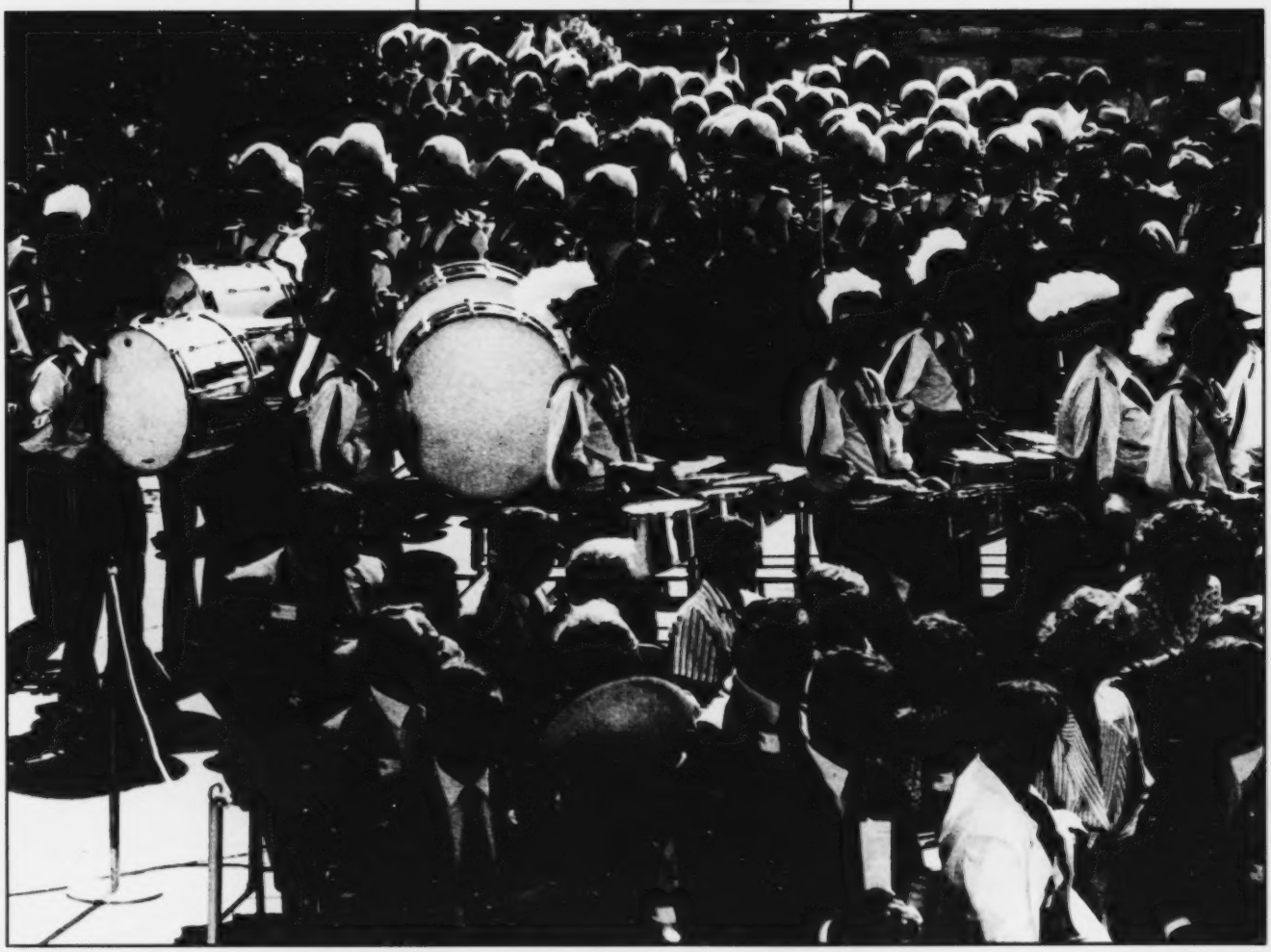
Right: **Former Archivist James B. Rhoads spoke at the Constitutional celebration in Seattle.**

Below: **A high school band caught people's attention in Topeka.**

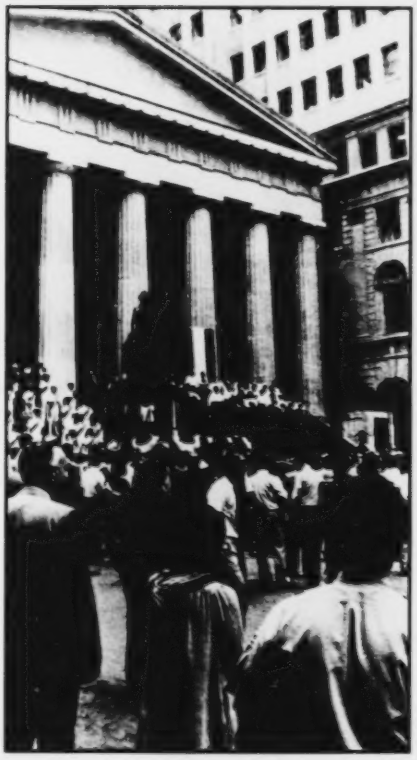
United States for twelve years, and he was born on Constitution Day.

The civic campaign soon gained the endorsement and support of an impressive array of national and local celebrities. For example, participants in ceremonies cohosted by the National Archives field offices included U.S. Senator John Danforth (MO) and his former colleagues, Senators Gary Hart (CO) and Thomas Eagleton (MO); Governors Michael Hayden (KS) and Roy Romer (CO); House Speaker James Wright (TX); Congressmen Tom Lantos (CA), and Robert Dornan (CA); Mayors Raymond Flynn (Boston) and Andrew Young (Atlanta); and Metropolitan Opera star Jerome Hines.

On Citizenship Day, September 16, field office employees wore patriotic colors and joined in the



In all the ceremonies, more than twelve hundred individuals became American citizens.



Right: **New York celebrated Constitution Day with band and choir.**

Below: **Children's International Peace Choir in California.**

nationally televised pledge of allegiance, led by President Reagan. The Los Angeles Federal Records Center planted a large Carrot Wood tree bearing a plaque to commemorate the occasion.

Festivities peaked on Constitution Day, September 17. Six field offices cosponsored naturalization ceremonies that day, preceded by the one held in Fort Worth on April 24. About twenty federal judges, joined by local bar associations and the Immigration and Naturalization Service, participated. AT&T, extending an arrangement made at the National Archives Building, offered each new citizen a free long distance call anywhere in the world. At the Chicago ceremony, one new citizen shouted into the phone: "But Papa, it's free!" In all the ceremonies, more than twelve hundred individuals became American citizens.

Adding celebration to solemnity, field office employees joined in birthday parties held not only at government buildings such as the JFK Federal Building and Georgia State Capitol but also at such unusual locations as the Denver Botanic Gardens, Candlestick Park, Knotts Berry Farm, and the deck of the U.S.S. Constitution. The parties featured bell-ringing, cake-cutting, sky-writing, and stamp-dating.

Bands played, choruses sang, color guards paraded. Officials issued proclamations and read parts of the Constitution, copies of which National Archives employees helped to distribute. At the Herbert H. Hoover Presidential Library, the carillon issued a two-tone peal lasting an appropriate two hundred seconds.

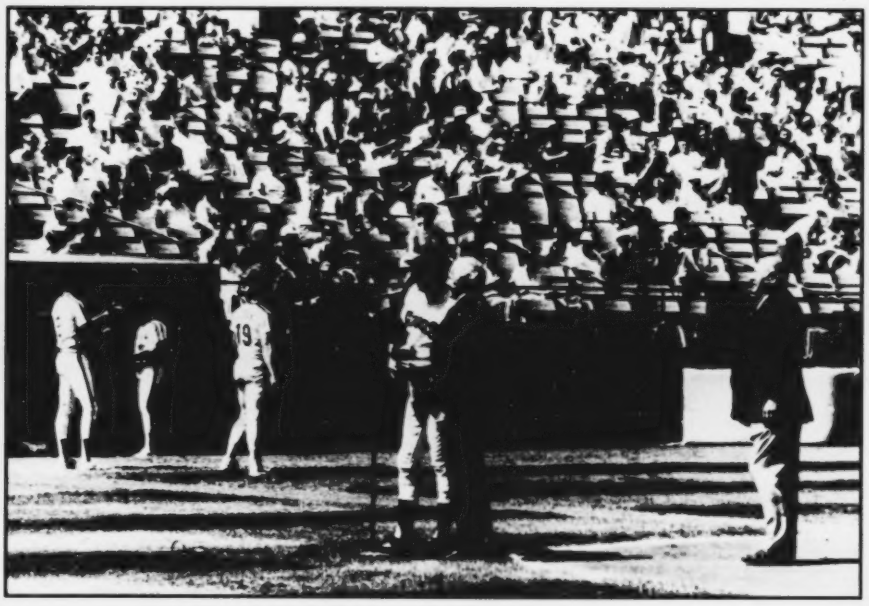
An estimated thirty-six thousand people attended Constitution Day events cosponsored by the National Archives field offices. This figure, almost equal to the seven-day total attending the vigil in the National Archives Building, certainly confirmed Ms. Barbara Jordan's view that the Constitution is "alive and well" in America.

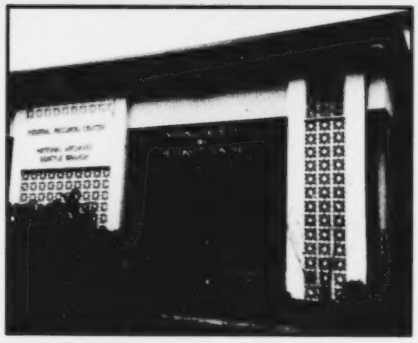
Contributors: Jill Brett, Rosanne Butler, Pat Caroleo, Susan Cooper, Elsie Freeman, Christopher Gearin, Cynthia Hightower, Edith James, Marilyn Paul

Above: **A public reading of the Constitution in Chicago.**

Right: **Kansas Governor Mike Hayden signed a Constitution poster.**

Below: **13,000 citizens took part in a Constitutional poll at NARA facilities.**





Above: **Baseball and the bicentennial at Candlestick Park, San Francisco.**

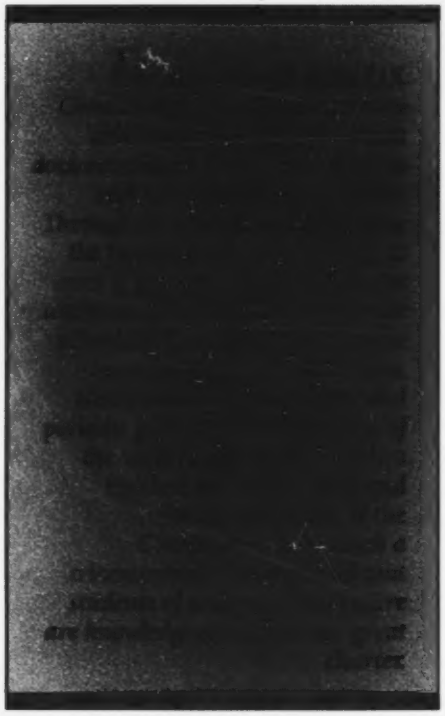
Top Right: **Constitutional ceremonies in Boston led by Mayor Ray Flynn.**

Center right: **Banners adorned many National Archives Centers.**

Below: **Judges led new citizens in the Pledge of Allegiance in Topeka.**

Teaching and the Constitution

Jean West Mueller



During the 87-Hour Vigil, a woman with two young sons and a third child slung in an infant carrier endeavored to pass the time standing in line as profitably as possible. Soothing her school-aged boys' impatience, she read the Preamble from her souvenir copy of the Constitution, explaining it to them in terms they could understand. She drew their attention to the shrine and the inscriptions above it.

The eldest, taking her cue, stopped fidgeting and pointed at the Barry Faulkner mural across the Rotunda from them. "Mamma," he asked, "Who are those men up there?"

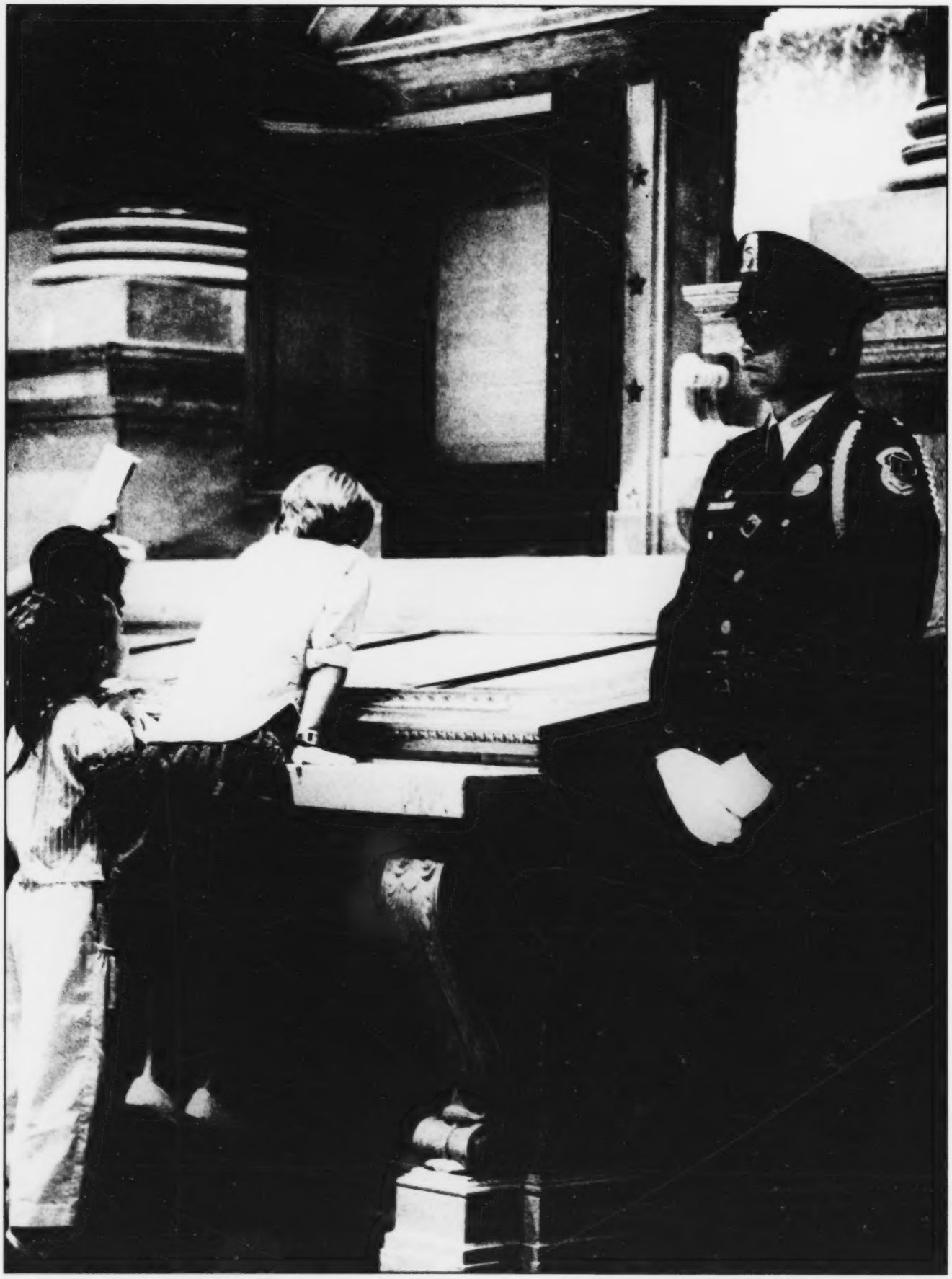
"Those are the men who signed the Constitution," she replied.

"How long ago was that?"

"Two hundred years ago," she patiently informed him.

He was silent a moment, staring at the archaically garbed assemblage, before wondering aloud, "Were there dinosaurs back then?"

Dinosaurs seem to stimulate childrens' curiosity and enthusiasm without much help from parents or teachers. The Constitution, its continuing history, and the issues engendered by it require considerable assistance. The Education Branch of the Office of Public Programs devoted much of its attention over the past four years to assisting teachers to grow more



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knowledgeable about the Constitution and about ways to teach students about the great document. Initially, the efforts of the branch were focused on developing Constitution education materials, but as September 1987 drew near and demands for personalized assistance accelerated, an increasing amount of time was spent in workshops and in-service programs, consulting, and responding to educational queries by mail and phone.

By fall of 1983 standardized test results and several studies had confirmed that an appallingly large number of students had a poor understanding of the Constitution and citizenship issues. Education staff at the National Archives began to prepare documentary materials that would examine the constitutional era, the development of the Constitution through both formal and informal means, and the evolution of constitutional issues. Using the holdings of the National Archives, our objective was to develop a supplemental teaching unit and to write a series of magazine articles that would assist teachers in secondary schools and junior colleges. We hoped students would come to understand and appreciate the Constitution as a vital force in their daily lives rather than to uncomprehendingly worship four antique pages in a cold metal and stone shrine.

In November 1985 *The Constitution: Evolution of a Government* was published. Like the six units that preceded it on other historical topics, this was a supplemental documentary teaching package. It consisted of thirty-four documents and a teachers guide with lesson plans and other instructional aids.

11/5/87

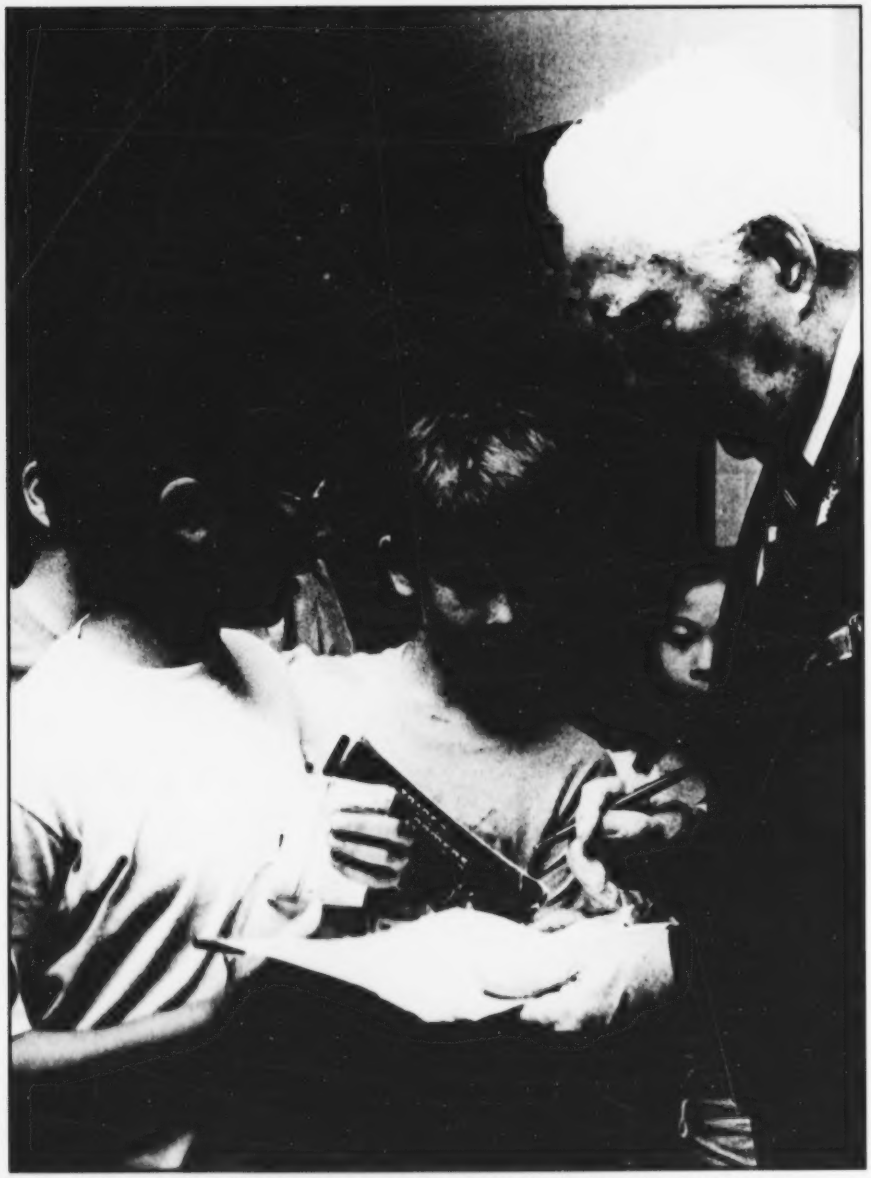
Dear, National Archives,

We are in third grade. We have been reading about the Consitution and the Bill of Rights. Our names are Curtis, Torrance, Rachel, and Caleb. We have a few questions to ask.

1. What if you have a flood?
2. What if the vault that holds the papers caught on fire?
3. What if the watchmen got shot?
4. Why cant women vote 70 years ago
5. Why did people think blacks were not a whole person?

Will you send use a copy of the Consfitution. Curtis, Torrance, Rachel, Caleb

Ms. Walker's third graders, Wellton, Ariz. include: Rachel Wood, Torrance Thompson, Caleb Tilbu, and Curtis Jones. (front row). Their interest spawned this incisive inquiry.



Former Chief Justice Warren Burger obliged young admirers by signing autographs. He chairs the Commission on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution.

Dear Mrs Robinson,

Thank you for coming to our school. You covered a lot about the Constitution and the signers. It would be a pleasure if you came back to our school. My favorite part that you talked about was when Ben Franklin was very sick. I hope you enjoyed your visit.

Sincerely
Jenny Black

The reception ... of The Constitution: Evolution of a Government exceeded the fondest expectations of both the writers and the publisher.

The unit was organized around three major themes: the making of the Constitution, the beginning of the government, and the evolution of a constitutional issue (freedom of religion). During the writing of the unit it became evident that the first section would be a grouping of landmark documents. Although desired by teachers and historically essential, they lacked personal warmth and the intrigue of eyewitness narratives. Thus the second segment, the beginning of the government, took the form of witnesses describing or addressing the government. Accounts ranged from David Bradhead's letter to Washington asking him for a position in the new government to the report on the Whiskey Rebellion by a regional revenue supervisor. Documents in the third section, religious freedom, were also selected for their approachability. A consistent favorite of teachers and pupils has been the 1875 memorial of 22,626 women of Utah requesting the reinstatement of polygamy in the territory.

The reception by educators of *The Constitution: Evolution of a Government* exceeded the fondest expectations of both the writers and the publisher, SIRS, Inc. of Boca Raton, Florida. It sold more quickly than any documentary unit hitherto prepared by this office; in the third quarter of 1987, as many copies of the Constitution unit were sold as the most recently introduced unit, *The Truman Years, 1945–1953*, sold during its first year. Another indication of the popularity of the material was the decision of the American Bar Association to

The constitution is very important to me. It has changed our lives.
HAPPY BIRTHDAY!
Dear Constitution
Glad you made it to 200. We are celebrating your birth day. We love you for your good laws.
Happy 200
birthday
We
Constitution

Schoolchildren from all across America helped the National Archives to celebrate the bicentennial of the Constitution. Many mailed in personal, often artistic, birthday cards.

include the Great Compromise lesson in its secondary teachers guide for teaching the Constitution.

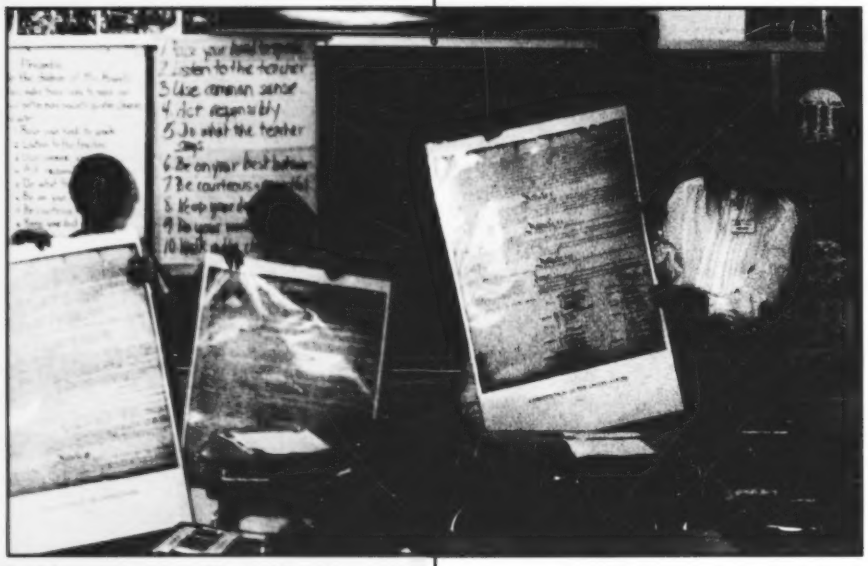
Materials development for educators drawing on regional documents was also pursued by the National Archives–Kansas City Branch. Drawing from records of the U.S. District Courts, staff members created "Constitutional Rights and Civil Liberties," a supplemental teaching unit. Since its completion in early 1987, the packages have been distributed to a number of users throughout school districts in the greater Kansas City area through an agreement with IBM. In October 1987 the unit was featured in a "Kansas City Illustrated" segment on a local television station, which examined renewed interest in the teaching of civics and history in public schools.

A broader audience for the Education Branch has been the membership of the National Council for the Social Studies. For ten years the education staff have written "Teaching with Documents" (formerly titled "Document of the Month"), a regularly featured department in *Social Education*, the official journal published by NCSS and distributed to its 23,000 members. With the support of the editorial staff of *Social Education*, the education staff of the National Archives embarked on a five-issue series highlighting the Constitution from September 1986 through September 1987. Topics in the series expanded beyond those covered in *The Constitution: Evolution of a Government*. Civil liberties were highlighted with a document from the files of the *Ex Parte Milligan* writ of *habeas corpus* case. Newspaper publisher Frank Gannett's statement on Franklin Roosevelt's court-packing scheme emphasized the theme of separation of powers. A Watergate memo to Leon Jaworski examined the expansion of the executive's power. Federalism was the subject of a 1956 letter about school desegregation. Finally, for the bicentennial issue, the case of the constitutional ratification by Delaware was provided for study. By supplying a historical note to the teacher and teaching suggestions along with brief but educational documents, the series could be readily implemented in the classroom.

Although *Social Education* is targeted to elementary as well as secondary teachers, the membership of NCSS is predominantly secondary school teachers. Anticipating intense interest in bicentennial materials for the earlier grades, the Education Branch was pleased to consult with Betty Debnam, editor of the *Mini Page*, on the publication of a twenty-issue series on the Constitution. The *Mini Page*, an insert in the Sunday comics, is syndicated to 450 newspapers nationally. A special newspaper written for elementary

. . . the Educational Press Association of America honored the Mini Page Constitution series with a meritorious achievement award . . .

school children, it features a well-illustrated text, games, and puzzles to encourage children to master and manipulate the educational information included in each issue. From March 1986 through September 1987 we worked together to produce monthly issues about the events leading up to the Constitutional Convention, issues and personalities at the convention, the content of the Constitution and its amendments, and the history of the document. Because of the length of the series and the number of requests for past issues, the series was reprinted in three sets with guidelines for teachers. Sales of these sets have been brisk. In March 1987 the Educational Press Association of America honored the *Mini Page* Constitution series with a meritorious achievement award for educational excellence in journalism. Rewards of a different kind were the fan letters, not only from children and elementary school teachers, but also from lawyers and law school professors who complimented the *Mini Page* for its outstanding treatment of the Constitution.



Archives Volunteer Marie Wood helped run an all-day document workshop at an elementary school.

Because teachers have had limited experience in using primary sources in the classroom, the program to make primary source materials available to secondary school classrooms has also included teacher training. This training has been provided through workshops and in-service programs at the National Archives, through on-site programs for state or district-wide meetings, and at teachers' professional associations across the nation. While in 1984 the education staff made six presentations, by 1986 the number had nearly tripled, to sixteen. By 1987 the number had skyrocketed to twenty-seven, of which twenty-four were devoted to using primary sources to teach some aspect of the Constitution. The staff discovered it had reached the limit of its physical capability and was forced to decline an additional six requests.

Teachers responded to the materials and suggestions with enthusiasm. In fifteen minutes, one group of elementary teachers designed a good way to apply knowledge of how a bill becomes a law to the schoolroom. They planned to divide a class into two and have each half act as a committee charged with drafting classroom rules for the year. Then the two groups, corresponding to the House and Senate, would compare rules and jointly revise them, acting as a joint conference committee, then submit the integrated rules to the whole class for a vote. Once adopted by the class as a whole (as Congress) the rules would be sent to the teacher, who, like the chief executive, could veto the rules or accept them. (Unlike the president, the teacher could use a line-item veto!) When the rules were signed by the teacher they would go to the principal of the school, who, acting as the Supreme Court, would judge the legality of the rules (law) against the supreme law of the school: the school board's policies and regulations (Constitution). Like Congress, the youthful rulemakers would face the perils of veto and having their rules struck down by the high court and the possibility of having to start all over again.

Secondary teachers were no less imaginative. A group of District of Columbia teachers looked at the Northwest Ordinance and saw it as a springboard for tracing the rights that were incorporated in the Constitution and Bill of Rights and examining those which have yet to arrive. They also saw in Article V and in the Twenty-sixth Amendment a means of invigorating the Constitution for their students by simultaneously introducing for discussion the proposed District of Columbia statehood amendment. Coincidentally, three weeks after the 87-Hour Vigil, the D.C. Statehood Committee conducted its own twenty-four hour vigil on the steps in front of the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C.

In an attempt to reach social studies teachers from all over the nation, proposals were submitted to professional conferences on the national, regional, and state levels. Two staff persons split up and headed to opposite ends of the nation in spring 1987 to conduct workshops for the Northeast Regional Council for the Social Studies in Boston, Massachusetts; Southeast Regional Council for the Social Studies in Savannah, Georgia; Great Lakes Regional Council for the Social Studies in Columbus, Ohio; and state councils for the social studies meeting in San Jose, California, and Albany, New York. Presentations were given to audiences as diverse as the American Bar Association, the First Amendment Committee for the Scottish Rite of Omaha, Nebraska, and the Smithsonian Institution.

Significantly more audiences were served as the regional archives branches organized workshops for the general public and for teachers to improve their familiarity with primary sources available in the regions. A "We the People" theme expounded in ethnic genealogy workshops proved popular in Chicago, Seattle, and Kansas City. In July the Chicago Branch's annual summer workshop for Great Lakes area teachers focused on "The U.S. Constitution: A Study in Primary Sources." Peter Bunce, director of the Chicago Branch, observed that teachers completed the program awestruck by the quantity and quality of documentary material available for classroom application. Representatives from the Seattle Branch participated in two teachers' workshops sponsored by Seattle's "Today's Constitution and You" group. They displayed selected branch holdings and discussed the documents' connections to the Constitution and the Pacific Northwest.

. . . many participants have produced projects related to the Constitution and its issues.

Since 1977 the National Archives has offered an eight-day workshop on the use of primary sources in the classroom called "Primarily Teaching." This workshop introduces teachers to the holdings and organization of the National Archives. Participants learn how to do research at the National Archives, how to create classroom material, and how to present documents in a way that enhances their students' basic skills and understanding of history. Each participant is responsible for developing a unit of study with teaching strategies around a specific topic, and many participants have produced projects related to the Constitution and its issues. In recent years, projects have included ones on Alexander Hamilton's plan for the Constitution, the use and abuse of executive power during the Japanese-American relocation, and the evolving interpretation of the religion clause of the First Amendment in *Wisconsin* v. *Yoder*. Because graduates of "Primarily Teaching" return to their home school districts as resource teachers, they have given workshops to fellow teachers on teaching the Constitution. Nettie McGrath had scarcely returned to Lakewood, Colorado, from her workshop in Washington, D.C., before being pressed into an August in-service program for fellow teachers. Other graduates have disseminated their projects and those of fellow participants through print. 1986 "Primarily Teaching" participant Michael Young published fellow participant Thomas Gray's unit on Alexander Hamilton's plan in *Perspectives*, the journal of the Nebraska Council for the Social Studies.

One of the least-expected events of the bicentennial was the overwhelming public demand for

"Primarily Teaching" workshops help teachers learn to research at the Archives and create teaching materials from the primary sources that they study.

assistance. The education staff processed educational queries at the rate of approximately one hundred letters a month through 1987. Phone inquiries peaked in September 1987 when the staff handled double the average number of requests from last minute callers. The biggest surprise of all was the unprecedented number of walk-in consultations. Staff members accustomed to two or three consultations a month were stunned when eighty-two educators from twenty-five states and the District of Columbia came to request guidance in teaching about the Constitution in the three months from July to September. Even people tangentially concerned with education came for advice — and occasionally to brag. The president of the Virginia Home Extension service collected ideas and described a planned bicentennial festival. A sheriff from New Orleans, in Washington to collect materials, passed around colorful snapshots of his boys' club bicentennial mural as proudly as a new father.

Teachers also took advantage of a cooperative effort between the *Washington Post* and the National Archives. The *Post* offered to teachers an educational materials packet that included reprints of a series of articles about the events leading up to the signing of the Constitution, copies of a special *Washington Post Magazine* issue about the Constitution, a poster, and the National Archives pocket commemorative edition of the Constitution. Also, Washington metropolitan area teachers were reimbursed by the *Post* for the cost of buses to bring classes on field trips to the National Archives Building to visit the Charters of Freedom.

Educational programs and workshops were also carried out by the National Archives Volunteers. The volunteer program, begun in 1976 for the observance of the bicentennial of the Declaration of Independence, has grown from a small group of 9 persons to the present corps of 143 men and women who provide service to the National Archives Office of Public Programs.

Many teachers and school children visited the exhibition area during the 87-hour vigil.

The biggest surprise of all was the unprecedented number of walk-in consultations.

The behind-the-scenes tours conducted by docents have always climaxed with a visit to the Charters of Freedom in the Rotunda. During the past two years of preparing for and celebrating the bicentennial, the Constitution became even more of a focal point as volunteers worked with both visitors to the National Archives and groups in the Washington area.

One way in which the volunteers helped to spread information about the Constitution was by assisting during the 87-Hour Vigil. While people waited in line for up to three hours to view the Constitution, volunteers circulated along the line to make the visitors feel welcome. Questions about the Constitution and the National Archives were cheerfully answered, and conversation helped to pass the time.

Throughout the 1985–86 school year, teachers featured lessons on the Constitution in anticipation of the bicentennial. From September 1985 through October 1987, 316 Constitution volunteer workshops were presented both in the Archives Building and through school outreach programs to 9,143 students.

The document workshops were geared toward students in grades five through twelve and highlighted more than fifty documents that illustrated both the beginnings of the written Constitution and the living constitution of today.

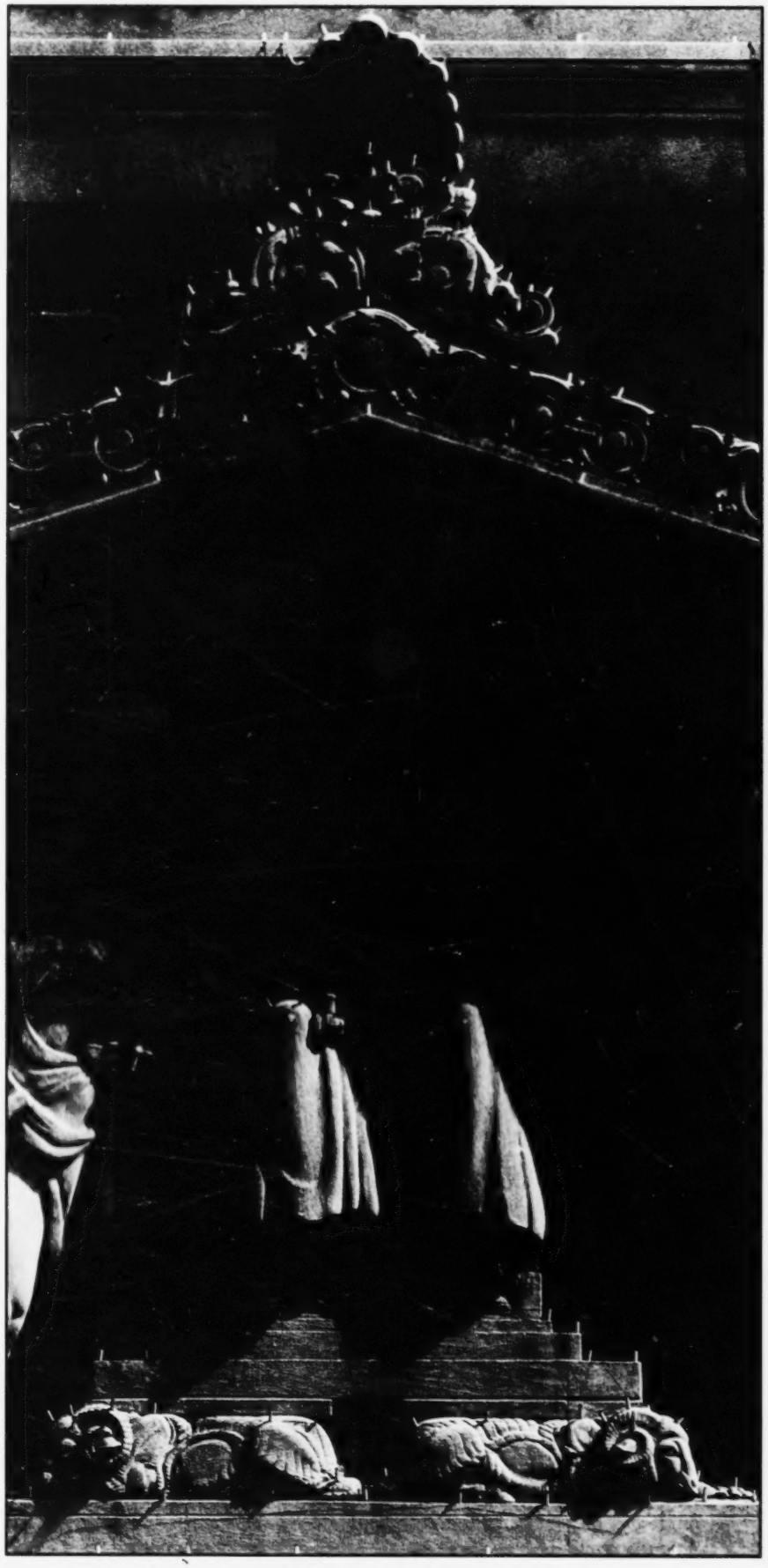
Schools responded with enthusiasm and creativity. In May 1987, fourteen docents participated in two all-day programs at Phoebe Hearst and John Eaton schools in

Washington to commemorate the opening of the Constitutional Convention two hundred years ago. Before the program, students had played a game with a set of tokens but without rules. Students soon discovered that they needed rules before they were able to play and made up their own rules. Each class developed its own constitution. An assembly opened the day with music, recitations, and drama. Later, back in the classrooms, docents brought facsimiles of the Constitution, the amendments, and other documents for study. Full-size facsimiles of the Constitution dwarfed the youngest children as they held up the pages for their classmates.

School groups that come to the Archives Building usually combine a document workshop with a tour. Out-of-town school groups from as far as California, Ohio, Florida, Michigan, and New York scheduled for a tour of the National Archives Building have participated in Constitution document workshops, too.

During the spring of 1987, a series of calls to the volunteer office seeking a speaker for September "Constitution Assemblies" in Fairfax County, Virginia, resulted in a decision to prepare and make available a slide/talk program. "Creating the Constitution" was designed to be used at elementary and intermediate levels for school assemblies and for class presentations. During the months of September and October alone, thirty-eight presentations were given to a total of 9,752 students.

Each presentation opened with a series of slides showing the National Archives Building and the Exhibition Hall, which emphasized the idea that "the Past is Prologue," and concluded with the thought that the young students watching the program would be the voting citizens of the twenty-first century. The impetus of the bicentennial will probably cause the Constitution



assembly programs to continue. Other docent workshops and tours featuring the Constitution will remain a permanent part of the program offerings.

Federal Records Centers across the country used the opportunities made available by the bicentennial of the Constitution to sponsor student essay contests. The youngsters who participated proved to be bright, honest about their appreciation of the benefits we all received under the Constitution, and, perhaps best of all, eloquent in very human, personal terms in explaining what the Constitution meant to them. Winners of the student essay contest sponsored by the Los Angeles Federal Records Center were honored at an awards ceremony at Knott's Berry Farm's Independence Hall replica on September 17. The San Francisco Federal Records Center also sponsored a Bicentennial essay contest during the summer for children of employees of Federal Executive Board member agencies. The winning essayists, including the child of a Japanese immigrant couple, received their awards as part of a formal program at the San Francisco Federal Records Center and Field Archives Branch Open House. In a broader sense, all students who participated in these contests, who expended the time and effort to think about the Constitution, were winners.

In one respect, Citizenship Day, celebrated by thousands of schoolchildren on Capitol Hill on September 16, 1987, was anticlimactic: On that day, there were no teachers in the education offices, no frantic calls for materials, no workshops, no constitutional teaching materials being prepared. Yet the very quiet and serenity of the day belied the fact that the efforts of constitutional educators were culminating where they were intended, in the thousands of classrooms across the United States in which dedicated teachers and inquisitive children studied the Constitution on its two-hundredth birthday.

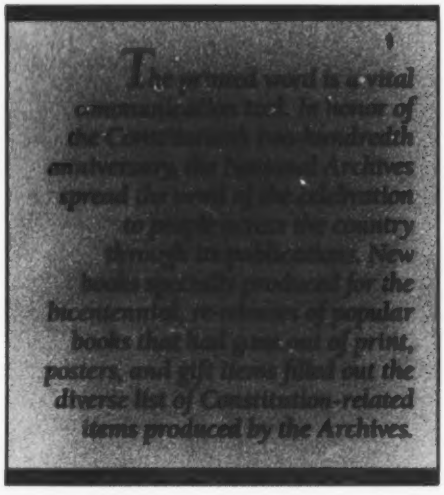
... all students who participated in these contests were winners.

The television cameras caught the speeches of the dignitaries, the parades, and the tolling of bells across the land. All of those words and actions, however stirring, have ended. They are fading recollections, fast becoming like sepia-tone prints in the scrapbooks of our memories. But the educators, whose quiet, unflamboyant work never came before the cameras, are intensely proud to know that their celebration of the Constitution, of all the celebrations, continues. It lasts because every year, in every school across the land, the children of the United States must learn about their Constitution, to understand it, to obey it, and when necessary, to challenge and expand it. There will be no three-hundredth anniversary celebration if the young do not learn about and cherish the Constitution, the principles it professes, the delicately balanced structure it created, and the procedures it includes that have made it flexible enough to grow as the country and its spirit have grown. As long as teachers and students reflect thoughtfully on the Constitution, our celebration, the celebration of the mind, endures.

Contributors: Rosanne Butler, June Robinson

A Commemoration in Print

Mary C. Ryan



The National Archives staged its celebration of the bicentennial of the Constitution using a multitude of media. The stage, film, exhibits, and classrooms were all featured in an effort to get the American public interested in and involved with our Constitution. Perhaps the most traditional way in which the National Archives reached thousands of people throughout the nation was through the publication of books and posters especially released for the bicentennial. People who could not participate in the events held in Washington or at the regional offices could share the celebration through the printed word.

Though the public may only have been aware of the events and programs as they happened, each of the Constitution-related activities had to go through a long period of planning and unglamorous production. Long before most people were thinking of the bicentennial, the National Archives began production on a number of special publications, both new and reissued.

Among the books that the Archives put back into print was Sol Bloom's *The Story of the Constitution*. Bloom, a representative to Congress from New York City, was chairman of the Sesquicentennial Commission in 1937, which produced this popular history for the 150th anniversary of the creation of the U.S. Constitution. After being out of print for years, the

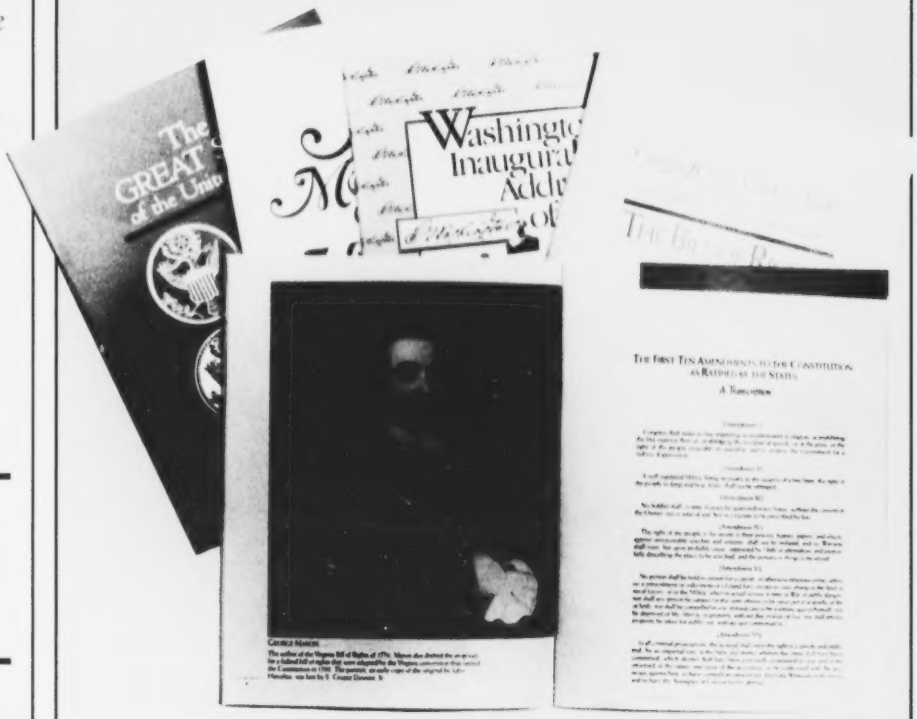
book is once again available with a new introduction.

Framers of the Constitution was based on another popular book that had long been out of print, the National Park Service's *Signers of the Constitution. Framers* divides into two parts: the historical background, which describes the events leading up to, during, and immediately following the Constitutional Convention; and the biographical essays, which are brief accounts of the lives of the delegates at Philadelphia. This new edition includes additional essays on the sixteen delegates who participated in the convention but did not sign the Constitution.

Tens of thousands of pocket Constitutions were sold, and tens of thousands more were distributed free.

While the words that fill the four parchments have achieved immortality, the man who actually put those words to the page has long remained in obscurity. With the publication of *The Man Behind the Quill: Jacob Shallus, Calligrapher of the United States Constitution,* his name will be more widely known. This first biography of Shallus, written by Arthur Plotnik of the American Library Association, tells the story of this son of a German immigrant who fought in the Revolutionary War and later was given the responsibility of transcribing the words that formed the foundation of our government. Landmark anniversaries in American history are always marked with recitals of great deeds by great men. The favorable reception of *The Man Behind the Quill* has shown that readers also want to get behind the scenes and learn about the ordinary and too-often forgotten people who help make great events possible.

One of the most popular items published by the National Archives



***Milestone Documents in the National Archives* is a series of booklets that reproduce facsimiles and transcriptions of the Constitution and other documents in American history.**

Reproductions of documents in the National Archives show the steps by which the amendments advanced.

was the pocket-size printed text of the Constitution and its amendments. When interest in the bicentennial began to pick up in 1986 and 1987, both individuals and groups looked for a handy reference. Tens of thousands of pocket Constitutions were sold, and tens of thousands more were distributed free to visitors to the National Archives during the 87-Hour Vigil. The Archives' booklet is a convenient and accurate transcription of the document that met the immediate needs of the celebration and will continue to meet citizens' needs for years to come.

The Constitution was reproduced in printed form in larger formats as well. Because of renewed interest in the document, the National Archives re-issued three of its booklets that provide background on and facsimiles of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

A More Perfect Union: The Creation of the U.S. Constitution chronicles the procedures of the 1787 convention in Philadelphia and reproduces the entire text of the document in facsimile and printed transcription. *The Bill of Rights* follows the process of amending the new Constitution.

The successful teaching unit, *The Constitution: The Evolution of Government*, was published by the National Archives.

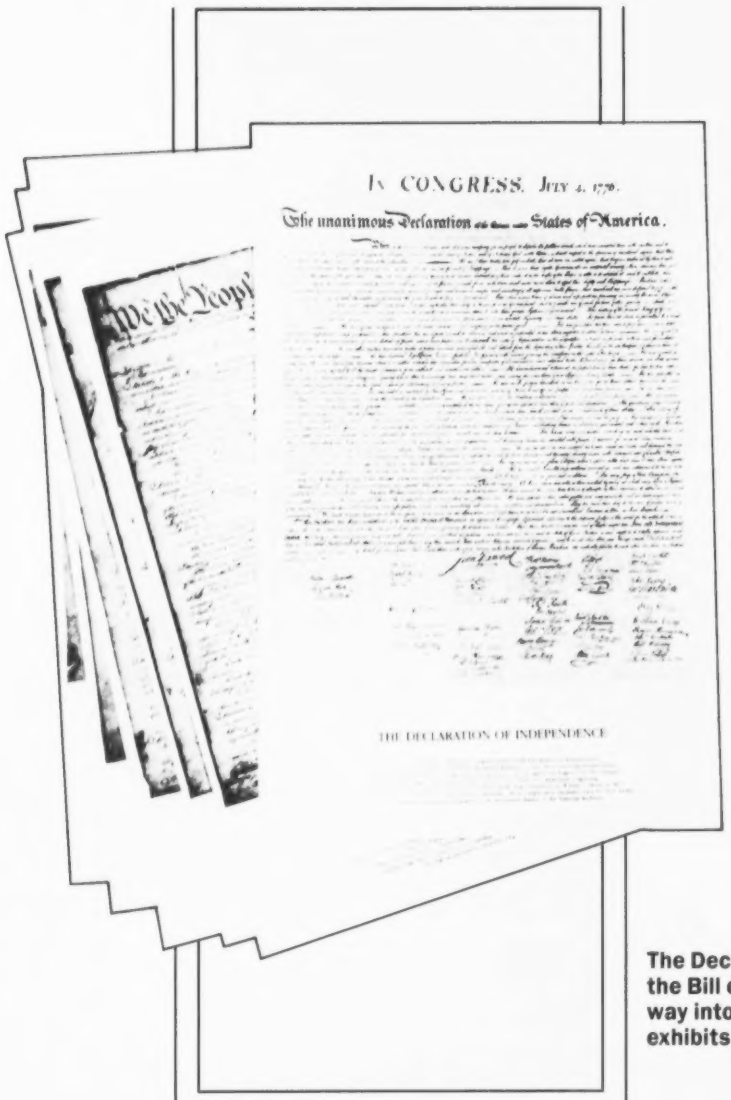
Reproductions of documents in the National Archives show the steps by which the amendments advanced — from James Madison's proposals through the various drafts — until ten were finally ratified by the states. Both *A More Perfect Union* and *The Bill of Rights* are part of a series of booklets called "Milestone Documents in the National Archives."

Both of these documents, along with the Declaration of Independence, are printed in facsimile in *Charters of Freedom: The Declaration of Independence, The Constitution, The Bill of Rights*. This booklet provides brief historical notes in a shorter format than the *Milestone Documents*.

Through its publications program, the National Archives contributed to the ongoing debate and discussion of this charter.

The National Archives also printed full-sized reproductions of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Declaration of Independence. These posters underwent a meticulous production process to ensure their faithfulness to the originals. In this past anniversary year, the posters were in great demand for schoolrooms, exhibits, and other Constitution-related events.

Other posters were published to help organizations celebrate the Constitution. "'Tis Done! We Have Become a Nation" is a twenty-poster exhibit featuring documents that chronicle the conception, creation, and implementation of the U.S. Constitution. Nineteen documents are reproduced, including the Declaration of Independence, the Virginia Plan, George Washington's annotated draft of the Constitution, and a Senate draft of the Bill of Rights. An introductory poster sets the scene with information on late eighteenth-century America. Because of the availability of this poster set, schools, government agencies, and private organizations were able to stage their own docu-



The Declaration, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights posters found their way into countless classrooms and exhibits across the country.

... the books, articles, and posters will survive as permanent legacies of the celebration.

ment exhibits to draw public attention to the history of our government.

In 1985, 1986, and 1987 the National Archives' quarterly journal, *Prologue*, featured articles on the Constitution in its fall issues. Chief Justice Warren E. Burger and Associate Justice Harry A. Blackmun joined noted constitutional scholars in commenting on the origins of the Constitution, the many changes and interpretations it has been subjected to, and its relevance to contemporary society. Subjects of the articles ranged from reflections on the importance of celebration to documentary editing projects on the early days of our government to examinations of the rights confirmed by the Constitution.

"We the People" was a theme that recurred throughout the observance of the bicentennial. These three famous words from the Preamble appeared wherever people celebrated the anniversary. The National Archives produced several items that incorporated this phrase as well as other souvenirs that supplemented the Archives' printed publications.

These days almost every event is

... behind all the fanfare, the United States Constitution remains a working, living framework.

commemorated with a T-shirt. The bicentennial of the Constitution was no exception. By far the most popular item in the Museum Shop during the 87-Hour Vigil was the bright "We the People" T-shirt. The same design was also emblazoned across the front of a sweatshirt.

Another item of apparel was a specially designed scarf that incorporated the signatures that appear on the Constitution. Tote bags were also popular, as were coffee mugs that reproduced U.S.

Above: **These Archives publications focused on the people and events of the Constitutional Convention.**

Below: **The Constitution Study Group collected several of its bicentennial lectures into these two volumes.**

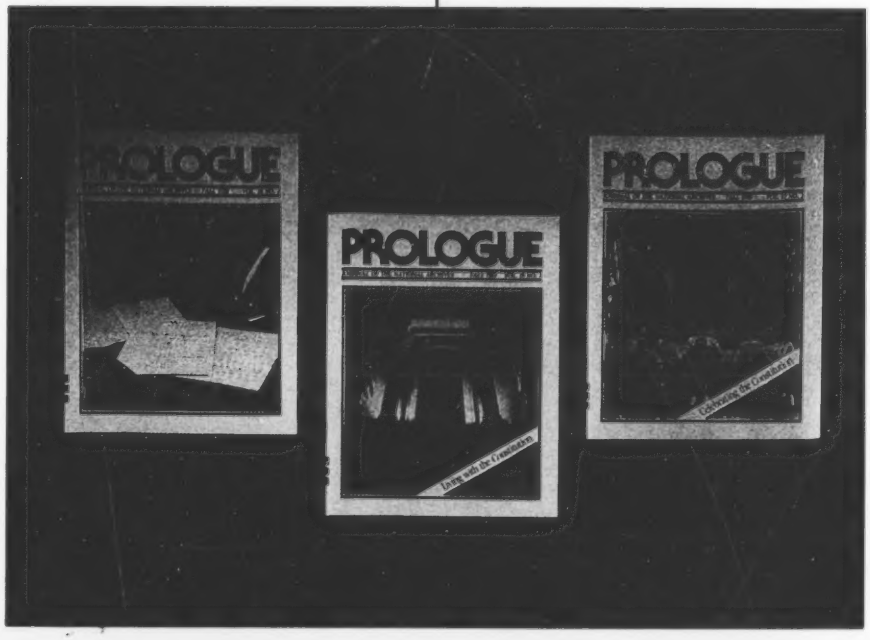
presidents' signatures or were decorated with a large, colorful "We the People" design.

In cooperation with the U.S. Army Field Band, the National Archives is the exclusive sales outlet for the band's audiocassette *We the People: To the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution*. This recording of patriotic music includes works from the revolutionary and early federal period through the twentieth century, featuring works by Irving Berlin, George M. Cohan, and John Philip Sousa.

The importance of the Constitution did not end on September 18, 1987. As the foundation of our own national government and the model for other constitutions worldwide, this great document is rightly revered. But behind all the fanfare, the United States Constitution remains a working, living framework. Through its publications program, the National Archives contributed to the ongoing debate and discussion of this charter. While memories of the festivities may fade, the books, articles, and posters will survive as permanent legacies of the celebration. The reason for the celebration itself was a document, and as the National Archives' motto states, *Littera scripta manet*, the written word endures.

Left: **An assortment of souvenir items as well as printed publications were produced to mark the bicentennial.**

Below: **For the last three years, *Prologue* has devoted its Fall issue to the Constitution.**



Sharing Constitutional IDEAS

Ralph S. Pollock

All hoopla and no substance? That question was confronted by a small group of National Archives docents several years before the bicentennial of the Constitution got under way. Remembering the dubious and unsatisfying observances of the bicentennial of the Declaration of Independence in the previous decade, we believed that the Constitution of the United States deserved better, and we began considering ways in which we might express our conviction.

In 1982 this small group of trained docents, all members of the National Archives Volunteers Association, decided to form a "study group" to research various aspects of United States constitutional history and to prepare papers for group discussion. At this stage, the purpose of the group was simply to better equip ourselves to lead discussions and conduct informed tours as the National Archives mounted its exhibits and other programs relating to the bicentennial. Before long, we began to get requests to admit the public to these meetings, to hear the papers, and join in the discussions. Given the group's purpose — to promote a better understanding of the American constitutional system — our answer was enthusiastically affirmative, and the National Archives Volunteers Constitution Study Group was born.

The first *public* lecture, free and open to the public, as all of

the group's programs have been, was presented in the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C., on January 19, 1983, by Dr. Charlene Bickford, coeditor of the First Federal Congress Project and then president of the Association for Documentary Editing. Dr. Bickford spoke about the creative work of the First Federal Congress in "launching the ship of state" — creating the first executive departments; establishing a judiciary; and overcoming what was undoubtedly the convention's most serious omission, amending the new Constitution to include a Bill of Rights. The reception accorded her presentation left no doubt that the Constitution Study Group had hit upon a good idea, although we did not then anticipate that by the time of the bicentennial of the signing in Philadelphia we would have presented over fifty public programs, all relating to the Constitution.

We also did not then foresee that, as the program continued to attract prominent scholars and other nationally known speakers, our influence would spread well beyond the confines of the National Archives Building. This unexpected attention reflected a broad and serious interest in the Constitution.

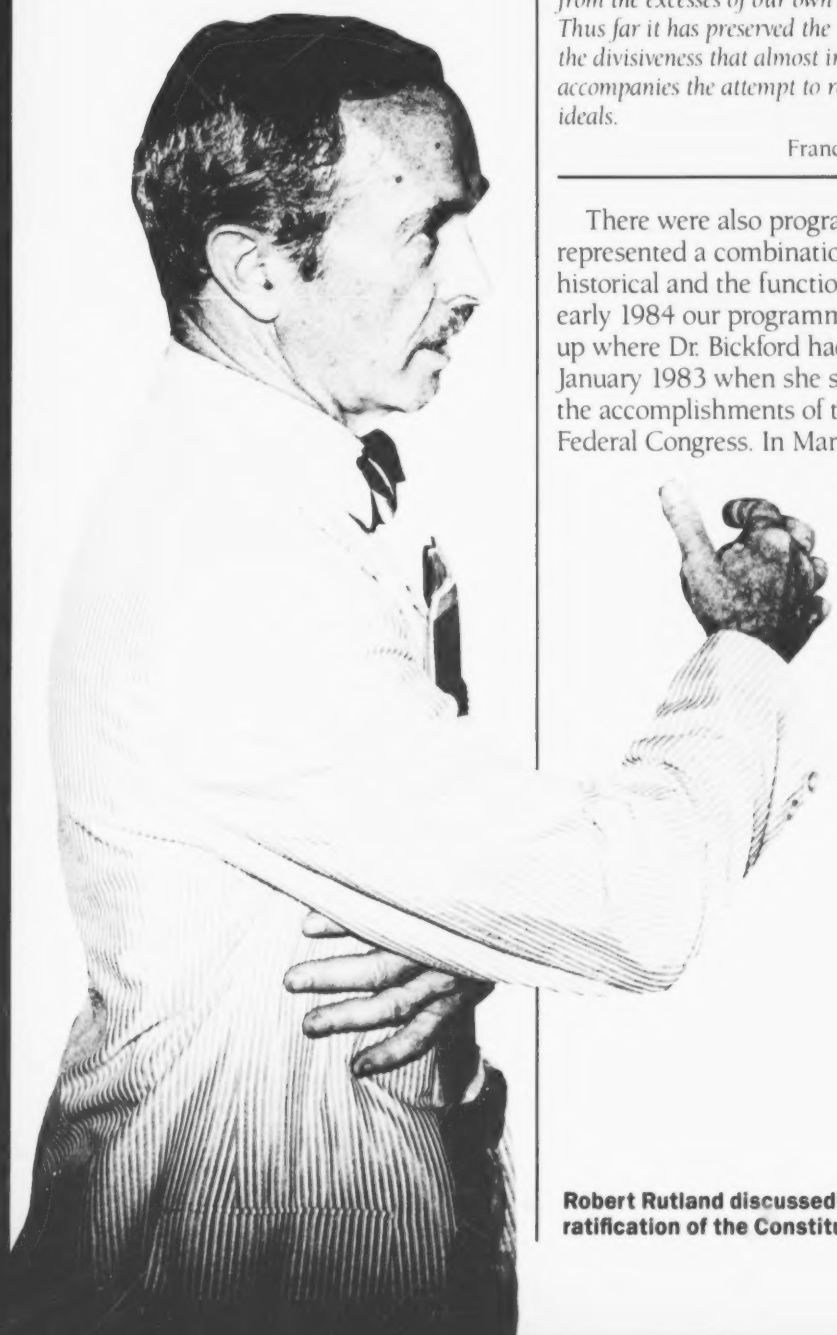
One of the Constitution Study Group's first related undertakings was to publish a transcription of the Constitution and, to the extent permitted by our limited financial resources, to make it available to interested individuals and groups on request. Within the next several years, and with the generous help of worthy benefactors, two volumes of collected lectures were published and made available to the public at minimum cost.[1] It was not long before the group's programs were being noted nationally, not only through our publications but also by means of radio and C-Span television broadcasts of many of the lectures. Not only was the Constitution Study Group "playing in Peoria" — whose public library requested and received some of our publications — but also in Beijing, where several seminars held there on the United States Constitution made use of our Constitution booklet. It was also reliably reported that one of the books *(Renewing the Dream)* was spotted at a book fair in Calcutta, India.

David Burnham spoke on privacy in the computer state.

By 1983, after demonstrating our ability to develop and present top-quality programs, the Constitution Study Group received its first grant — from the District of Columbia Community Humanities Council, an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. This grant enabled us to proceed with programming on a longer-term basis, to afford additional recognition to speakers in the form of modest honoraria, and to provide necessary travel funds.[2] It also permitted us to plan a variety of lectures and include topics not usually covered in similar programs.

There were and would continue to be programs commemorating significant milestones in the historical development of the American constitutional system, beginning with a program on September 21, 1983, on the Treaty of Paris, featuring Professor John Major from the University of Hull. Aside from being the first essentially historical presentation, commemorating the event that afforded formal recognition of our country as an independent nation-state, this program was of particular interest because Professor Major had come to us from Hull, England, which was the constituency the British signer of the Treaty of Paris, David Hartley, represented in the House of Commons.[3]

But other programming criteria laid equal claim to the efforts and available programming time of the Constitution Study Group. There were, of course, topics having to do with the basic organization as well as the fundamental processes of the federal government. James Sundquist and former Congressman Henry Reuss, both then associated with the privately organized Committee on the Constitutional System,[4] spoke on separate occasions on matters dealing with the organization and functioning of our governmental structure. Mr. Sundquist spoke on the question of whether the structure was good for another century, and Mr. Reuss on whether it was a good idea to have another constitutional convention. (The answers were, respectively: "probably not without some fine-tuning" and "no, but there is an alternative.")



Robert Rutland discussed the ratification of the Constitution.

Who shall guard the guardians? *The Constitution provides an answer to that — the three branches, the checks and balances on power will do that. This Constitution has not checked our idealism, but thus far it has preserved us from the excesses of our own enthusiasms. Thus far it has preserved the Union from the divisiveness that almost invariably accompanies the attempt to realize our ideals.*

Frances Fitzgerald

There were also programs that represented a combination of the historical and the functional. In early 1984 our programming picked up where Dr. Bickford had left off in January 1983 when she spoke of the accomplishments of the First Federal Congress. In March of the latter year Dr. Maeva Marcus, director of the Supreme Court Papers Project, spoke about the first ten years of the Court, a period about which not very much had been known, with many Americans understandably thinking that the Supreme Court had actually begun with the great John Marshall. On April 18 of the same year, the speaker, Dr. Gordon Hoxie, very graciously (but undeservedly) gave the program planners credit for selecting the date of the Battle of Lexington for his presentation. Dr. Hoxie, president of the Center for the Study of the Presidency, who had formerly served in the White House during the Eisenhower administration, spoke on the Constitution and the presidency, with particular emphasis on the first administration of George Washington, a time when many precedents were set.

Topics relating to individual rights and constitutional values were given special emphasis by the Constitution Study Group. Bill of Rights Day (December 15) was observed each year with a lecture appropriate to the occasion, beginning in December 1983 with Federal Judge Meyer Rosenn speaking on "Rights in the Basic Constitution." Others who spoke on individual rights and liberties included David Burnham who, in December 1986, spoke on the impact of technology on the right to privacy, and Professor Burt Neuborne of the New York University Law School, who spoke in December 1987 on "Individual Rights in the Next Century."

Topics relating to individual rights and constitutional values were given special emphasis by the Constitution Study Group.

Certain other topics in the general category of individual rights were given special emphasis by

repetition. For example, religious liberty was the subject of talks given by Edd Doerr, executive director of Americans for Religious Liberty (December 1984); Professor A. E. Dick Howard (December 1985); and Associate Justice Harry A. Blackmun (June 1987). Considering the importance of religious liberty and church-state separation in American history, and the fact that this principle represents America's unique contribution to human freedom worldwide, the Constitution Study Group considered this emphasis essential to a proper understanding of our basic constitutional system.[5]

Another major category reflected in our varied programming included subjects of topical interest,

. . . the vision of what is a right is not fixed in time. . . . We sit here in 1987 with an extraordinary constitutional document that is the envy of the free world, having achieved an extraordinary set of protections for political values that permit our society to operate as an open and democratic society in ways that no country has ever dreamed of doing . . .

Burt Neuborne

many of them problems or concerns of a continuing if not a permanent character. On July 15, 1987, Richard Barnet of the Institute for Policy Studies dealt forthrightly with the difficult matter of national security in the nuclear age. Earlier, on November 15, 1984, the Honorable Michael D. Barnes, then representing the Eighth Congressional District of Maryland in the House of Representatives, and at that time a member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, spoke courageously on the role of the Congress in the making of foreign policy, and specifically on the intractable matter of war powers, a problem still waiting to be resolved. An equally and perhaps more difficult matter was taken up by William E. Colby, a former director of Central Intelligence, who spoke on May 15, 1985, about the Constitution and the CIA, grappling with the problem of conforming secret governmental activities with accountable constitutional government.

Professor Forrest McDonald lectured on Shays' Rebellion.

Edward Papenfuse lectured on the Annapolis Convention.

Judith Krug spoke on libraries and free speech.

Accountability is the quintessential democratic value on which the Constitution is based. In recent years the American government has literally split in two. In foreign affairs it acts as a secretive, fitfully accountable state run by a relatively small national security elite, while in domestic affairs it functions reasonably well as a democratic republic.

Richard Barnet

Other topical subjects dealt with in the course of Constitution Study Group programming included: the impact of science and technology on the constitutional system (William Carey), the influence of the media on the electoral process (Dean Sanford Ungar and Martin Schramm), problems of the cities (Mayor George Voinovich of Cleveland), the importance of a free yet responsible press (Daniel Schorr and Floyd Abrams), censorship and the information problem generally (Judith Krug of the American Library Association), and the continuing problems of equal protection for women and minorities (Dorothy Ridings, Virginia Purdy, and Father Robert Drinan). Time constraints alone, not a shortage of topics or concerns having constitutional implications, limited the number of lectures presented under this heading.

For over five years the National Archives Constitution Study Group presented rich fare indeed, all offered in a dignified manner appropriate to the occasion. Taken in their entirety, the lectures constituted a source of historical and factual information along with informed commentaries relevant to the Constitution on its two hundredth anniversary. Although by

Columnist Edward Yoder was a popular speaker.

general consensus this has been a period of rampant political ideology, the lectures were surprisingly free of ideology and reflected balance and fairness. The speakers deserve great credit for the dispassionate and meaningful way they dealt with their assigned topics.

Much credit also goes to those who attended these programs; cumulatively, thousands came to learn and to understand. The Constitution Study Group takes pride in the fact that these programs were always free and open to all. We never charged an admission free nor otherwise restricted attendance. Some members of the audience were fairly regular attendees while others were attracted by certain topics or speakers. But all were keenly interested and well informed, as they demonstrated in the rather sophisticated questions put to the speakers or in their comments on the various points. Further, these lectures were public forums that provided opportunities for ordinary citizens as well as those representing civic and bicentennial organizations to meet prominent scholars, officials, and the like and exchange information and views with each other. The special displays of original documents provided by the professional staff of the National Archives from their vast holdings were another feature that further enriched these programs and promoted discussion.

We still have a long way to go in many areas to ensure equal protection of the laws to all Americans. Yet it is quite remarkable when we look back over the past generation to see what the courts have done to elaborate on the basic concept enunciated in the Fourteenth Amendment. . . . The second generation of founding fathers had great foresight to adopt that term.

Robert Drinan, S.J.

Father Robert Drinan spoke on equal protection under the law.

In no nation in the world is there as much genuine religious liberty as there is in ours. For this blessing, we may thank a benevolent Providence. In more temporal terms, we may also thank, in good part, the genius of the framers. Among those we should acknowledge, in particular, [are] James Madison, who gave us the Memorial and Remonstrance and who saw the First Amendment through Congress, and Thomas Jefferson, who gave us the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom.

A.E. Dick Howard

The following speakers participated in the Constitutional Lecture Series:

Floyd Abrams
Michael D. Barnes
Richard J. Barnet
Herman Belz
Charlene Bickford
Harry A. Blackmun
Albert Blaustein
Kenneth Bowling
David J. Branson
Warren E. Burger
David B. Burnham
James MacGregor Burns
William D. Carey
William E. Colby
Marcus Cunliffe
Lloyd Cutler
Edd Doerr
Robert F. Drinan, S.J.
Thomas M. Durbin
Frances FitzGerald
Alan Geyer
Joseph B. Gorman*
A. E. Dick Howard
R. Gordon Hoxie
James C. Hutson
John P. Kaminski
Phyllis Kaminsky
Michael Kammen
Stanley N. Katz
Judith F. Krug
Rex Lee
Shaw Livermore, Jr.
Maeva Marcus
Forrest McDonald
Abner J. Mikva
Richard B. Morris
Betty Southard Murphy
Robert R. Nathan
Burt Neuborne
Norman J. Ornstein
Jean Otto
Edward C. Papenfuse
Robert S. Peck
J. G. A. Pocock
Virginia Purdy
Harold C. Relyea
Henry Reuss
Dorothy S. Ridings
Richard L. Roe
Meyer Rosen
Robert A. Rutland
Stephen H. Sachs
Daniel Schorr
Martin J. Schram
Herman Schwartz
James Sundquist
Dwight L. Teeter, Jr.
Kenneth W. Thompson
Sanford J. Ungar
George V. Voinovich
Edwin M. Yoder, Jr.
James W. Zirkle

*Deceased

NOTE: The above list does not include the names of fifteen symposium panelists.

The Constitution Study Group is particularly proud of the *special* programs it was able to offer, not only because they were done with relatively limited resources, but also because of the excellent results achieved. With the assistance of the American Newspaper Publishers Association Foundation, a colloquium on the First Amendment press clause was offered at the National Archives on November 6, 1985. Some characterized it as the best discussion program they had ever heard on this important subject. Following an inspiring keynote address by well-known journalist and commentator Daniel Schorr, a distinguished panel of four experts on First Amendment matters, with U.S. Bicentennial Commission member Betty Southard Murphy as moderator, presented a most insightful analysis of such pressing contemporary free press issues as libel, privacy, access to official information, and press responsibility. Panelists included Washington attorney David Branson (libel); Professor Dwight Teeter from the journalism department of the University of Texas at Austin (privacy); CIA Assistant General Counsel James Zirkle (access to official information); and Jean Otto, then chairman of the First Amendment Congress and editorial page editor of the Rocky Mountain News (press responsibility). It was one of the "finest hours" of government-press collaboration. Jefferson and Madison would have been delighted had they been there.

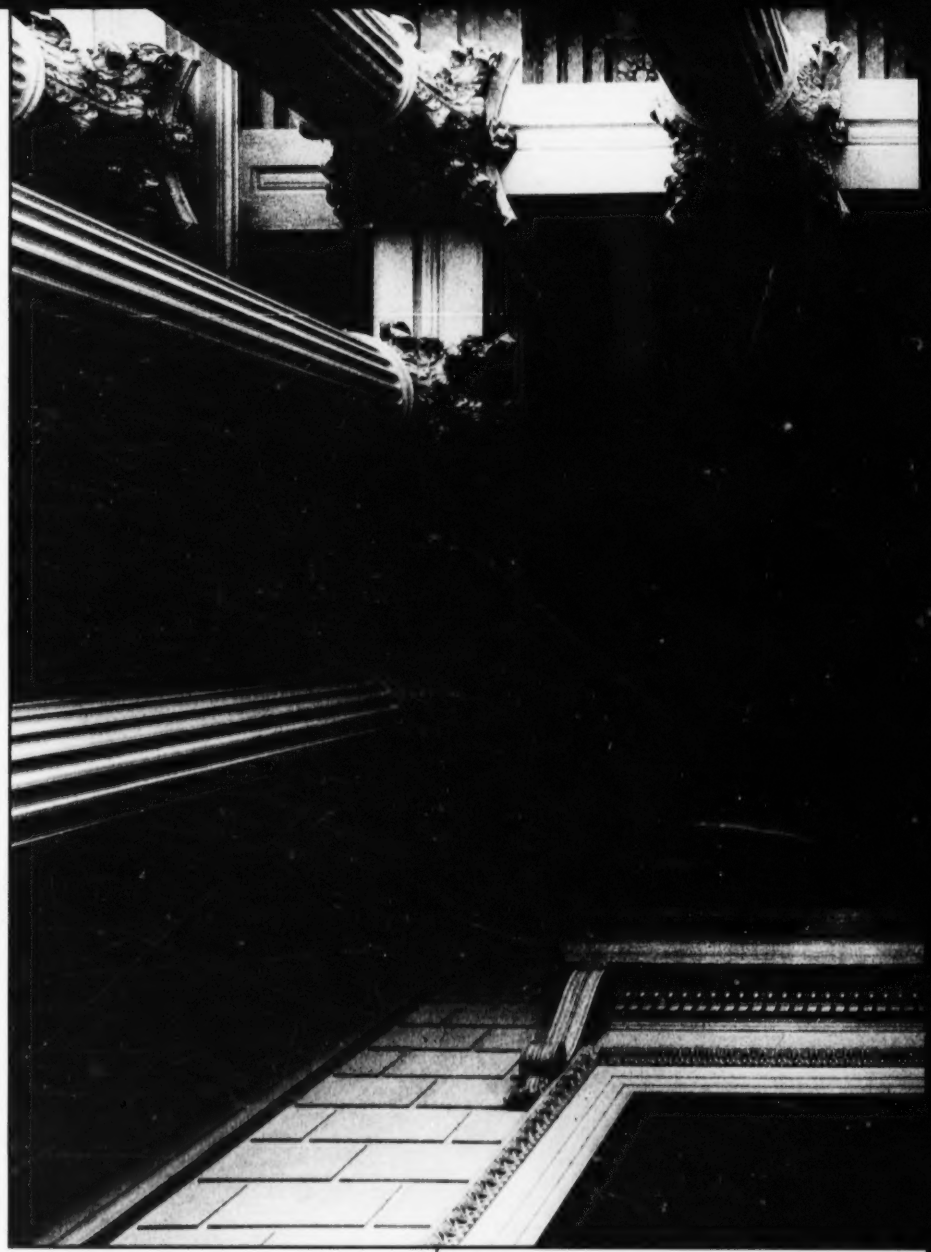
A well attended lecture sponsored by the Constitution Study Group.

Unquestionably the Constitution Study Group's most ambitious undertaking in its five-year history was an all-day symposium held on March 14, 1985. With the theme "Preparing for the Celebration of the bicentennial,"[6] the symposium was the first major program on what was then a pressing subject. It even antedated the creation of the U.S. Bicentennial Commission. Financial support from the Maryland Humanities Council and the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities augmented that provided by the D.C. Community Humanities Council. With the assistance of the American Bar Association's Commission on Public Understanding About the Law, the Constitution Study Group was able to present nationally known scholars along with outstanding individuals involved in bicentennial program planning to hear addresses and participate in discussion panels.

The symposium was organized around three sessions. A morning session (held in the Great Hall of the Department of Justice) featured Professor James MacGregor Burns as keynote speaker and included Professor Michael Kammen and Professor A. E. Dick Howard. In the afternoon, symposium participants gathered in the National Archives Building to hear panel discussions on national programs, media programs, special community programs, and youth and student programs. These sessions provided excellent opportunities for the exchange of ideas among those involved in planning bicentennial activities.

An evening program in the National Archives Rotunda began with the Color Guard and musical units from the Old Guard Regiment stationed at Fort Myer, Virginia. Speakers for this ceremonial session included then Chief Justice Warren Burger, A. E. Dick Howard, and others. Both substantively and symbolically, the symposium served to stimulate planning for the bicentennial celebrations.

By September 1987, the month of the bicentennial of the signing in Philadelphia, the question might appropriately have been asked



For some time, some people . . . have argued that, in certain areas of law, the press should be afforded special First Amendment protection. It has not, I hasten to say, been an overwhelmingly persuasive argument in the courts. But now the focus is changing. The press needs the same protection as everyone else. And everyone else needs more protection than they have today.

Floyd Abrams

Floyd Abrams focused on the issue of freedom of speech.

whether the Constitution Study Group had achieved its purpose. The answer would of course depend on how its purpose was defined. On the basis of its *original* purpose, much more had been accomplished than was originally planned — or even hoped. However, in terms of the possibilities that opened up as the program evolved, while much was accomplished, there were important subject areas either left out or not adequately attended to that surely warranted coverage in relation to the health and well-being of the constitutional system.

Although the Constitution Study Group succeeded in offering over a five-year period many of the history and "civics" lessons that Warren Burger, as chairman of the U.S. Bicentennial Commission repeatedly advocated, there were disappointments and omissions in the programming. Despite repeated efforts to schedule a prominent and well-qualified speaker, one of the more serious omissions involved the subject of education, and more specifically the importance of the public school system to the sustaining of our democratic institutions. As statistics on school drop-outs and rising illiteracy continued to be reported, one

. . . I am not sure there is . . . such a thing as a "right to know," but there is a need to know. An informed public is absolutely necessary in a democracy. . . .

Daniel Schorr

Daniel Schorr gave the keynote address on the First Amendment.

could only wonder how long constitutional democracy could survive under such conditions. One also wondered if the policy makers and professional educators had forgotten the historic connection between democratic institutions and an educated citizenry.

One also could wonder if our programming had dealt adequately with the vital problem of war and peace in its constitutional context. Although Richard Barnet and Congressman Michael Barnes had courageously (almost heroically) addressed the related constitutional issues, particularly issues relating to the War Powers Act, these issues seemed more intractable at the end of our five-year programming period than they had been at the beginning. This and the continuing problems of accountability on the part of public officials, and the pressing problem of the relation of the United States Constitution to a rational world order, left many important matters of constitutional business unfinished as the bicentennial period came to a close.

But programming disappointments were to some extent offset by unexpected developments that added interest as well as substance to the series. However one may view such matters from a political standpoint, the congressional hearings on both the Iran-Contra Affair, as it came to be called, and on the nomination of Judge Robert Bork to be associate justice of the Supreme Court,-served to stimulate interest in the workings of the constitutional system. This was especially true in the areas of accountability and individual rights, the topics with which we concluded our Bicentennial '87 Lecture Series. Unusual if not unprecedented public statements on constitutional matters by several of the sitting justices of the Supreme Court also attracted public attention and general discussion as well. And the "original intention" thesis of Attorney General Meese provoked useful debates that not even he could have anticipated.

All of these developments served to give substance and meaning to the celebration of the bicentennial of the Constitution, which we hope resulted in a deeper appreciation of the nation's fundamental charter by the citizens of this country. As for the National Archives Constitution Group, we did our best — and it would be nice to think that the Founding Fathers would have approved.

NOTES

[1]Many of the lectures are now available in book form. Our published books are: *Renewing the Dream: National Archives Bicentennial '87 Lectures on Contemporary Constitutional Issues*, ed. Ralph S. Pollock (1986) and *The Blessing of Liberty: Bicentennial Lectures at the National Archives*, ed. Robert S. Peck and Ralph S. Pollock (1986). Most of the March 1985 symposium presentations were published in the Fall 1985 issue of *Prologue*.

[2]In the course of its programming, the Constitution Study Group received financial assistance from a number of other benefactors: the American Bar Association, the American Newspaper Publishers Association Foundation, the League of Women Voters, the Maryland Humanities Council, and the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.

[3]In addition to the Treaty of Paris, other historical events commemorated by special programs were: the Mt. Vernon Meeting, the Annapolis Convention, Shays's Rebellion, the adoption of the Northwest Ordinance, the 200th anniversary of the adoption of the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, the 250th anniversary of the seditious libel trial of John Peter Zenger, the ratification of the Constitution, the adoption of the Bill of Rights, and special programs on the First Federal Congress, the first presidency, and the first Supreme Court.

[4]The Committee on the Constitutional System is a private group formed in 1982 "to examine the political system and search for ways to improve its performance." It is composed of present and former public officials, party officials, lawyers, scholars, journalists, business leaders, and other interested citizens. (See Donald L. Robinson, ed., *Reforming American Government*, (1985)).

[5]For Associate Justice Blackmun's statement on the Religion Clauses, see the Fall 1987 issue of *Prologue*.

[6]The Fall 1985 issue of *Prologue* contains symposium statements by keynoter James MacGregor Burns, A. E. Dick Howard, Chief Justice Warren Burger, and others.

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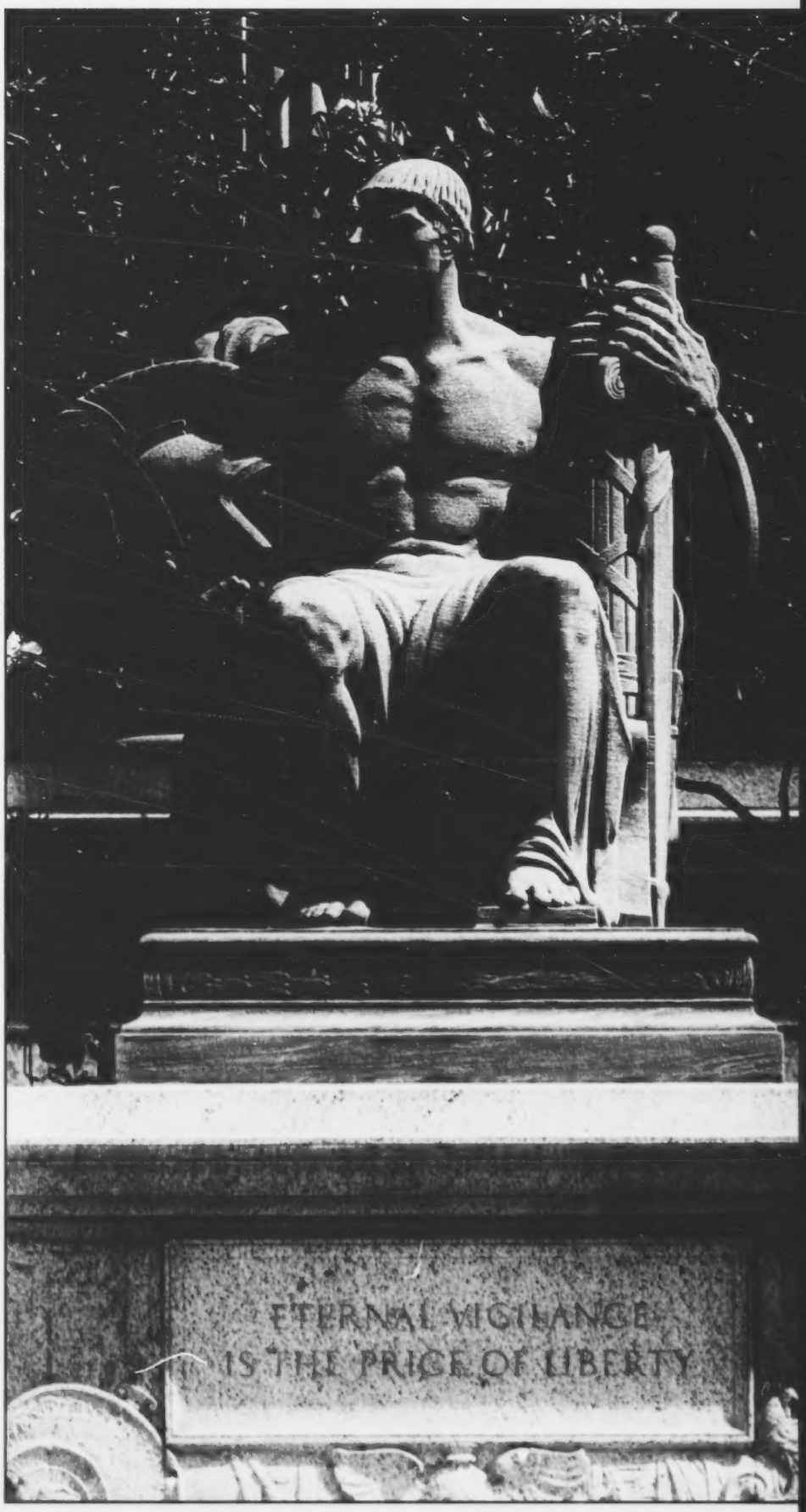

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